The Spirit World

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Mr. John Ormerod.

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The Spirit World

BY

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"THE RISEN DEAD," "THE BANKRUPT HEART," ETC., ETC.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.

MY CORRESPONDENCE.

From my earliest and most unthinking days I have always felt that the one, great, unfulfilled want of this world is the undeniable proof that, when we leave it, we shall live again, or, rather, that we shall *never cease* to live. There must be a big screw loose somewhere in the various religions presented to us, which profess to give us everything but this—vague hopes—threatening fears—promises of reward and dread of punishment—but not *an atom of proof* that, having passed out of this body, we shall exist either to enjoy the one, or endure the other. And never have I been so thoroughly convinced of the truth of my assertion, as since I published, now three years ago, the record of my experience in Spiritualism. Since that book appeared, letters have poured in upon me from strangers, in every habitable part of the globe, at the rate of seven and eight a day, and the cry of one and all has been the same: "Show us our dead! Give us some sign that they still live and that we shall live with them."

Mothers, like Rachel, weeping for their children and refusing to be comforted, because they were not; young men, who had studied all the known orthodox writers in order to find out the truth, and found themselves only further from God for their pains; old men and old women who, at the close of life, had nothing tangible to cling to; men of law and science and literature—all these and many others, have written to me, or come to see me, in consequence of having read "There is no Death," and very proud have I

been of creating so much curiosity and interest in a subject, which is a religion to me. But if it has made me glad, it has also made me sad. Here were a crowd of professedly Christian men and women, who had been under the teaching and guidance of their respective churches since their infancy, coming to a stranger (almost as ignorant as themselves), to teach them how to find out if it is true, that when they pass out of their bodies, they shall wake to meet those they have loved in this world. Have not their spiritual pastors and masters, therefore, inculcated this great fact in their minds? Perhaps so—undoubtedly so—but they had *no proof* to give them that their doctrine was true. They could only rest their belief on the traditions that had been handed down to them through the history of the world. A priest will talk to his congregation about heaven and hell—about God's judgments and God's rewards—about an eternity of misery or blessedness—but pin him to the point to tell you how he knows what he preaches to be true, and he can only hark back to the testimony of the Bible, which, however it was originated, we all know to be half lost and wholly mistranslated. And though history may be sufficient for us, when we are asked to believe that William the Conquerer landed in England in the year 1066 (because, if the truth were told, we do not care one jot nor tittle if he ever landed here at all)—it is *not* enough to rest all our hopes of a future life upon, for ourselves and those we love. The torn and bereaved heart wants proof—actual, irrefragable proof, that those who have gone before us, live and breathe somewhere; that they are not entirely beyond the limits of our sight and love and remembrance; that the deepest feelings of our hearts have not been wasted, but are bearing fruit still, and even our sorrow for their loss affords a tender pleasure to the spirits who sympathize with us.

If it were possible for me to publish all the letters I have received, if you could have read the cries of pain and doubt and bereavement which they contained, the anxiety to learn from my own lips that what I had written was the unvarnished, solemn truth, you would understand, far better than I can tell you here, what the one, great want of this world is—what religion has never given it and never will give it, whilst the Church arrogates to itself all the miracles that are taking place around us and in our midst every hour. Many of the letters I allude to I have answered—many more I have been regretfully compelled, from want of time, to leave unanswered, for the questions propounded to me would, in many instances, have required another volume to be properly discussed in, and these it is my intention to touch upon now, and, as far as in me lies, to satisfactorily reply to. But, though most of my letters, with their deep black borders, have made me weep, as I perused the human cries within them, that might, in many instances, have been penned with the writer's heart blood, others of my correspondents have vastly amused me, by their absurd demands and queries, and the utter ignorance they displayed of the uses or the meaning of Spiritualism. How plainly they demonstrated how little the beautiful theory of an after-life enters the Christian religion. Their letters and the sentiments they contained were a disgrace to the teachers and the church that could inspire them with no better founded hope, nor wider knowledge than they displayed. Christians all *say* they believe in a future existence, but hardly one in a thousand realizes the truth of it, and little wonder, considering they have never received a single good proof that it will be theirs. What patient would believe a doctor, or a dentist, on his unsupported word, that he could cure him of his pain? He requires the testimony of those who have

been cured before he trusts himself to his tender mercies. In this world it is useless for the menders of aches and pains, to assure their patients: "It is so!" The patients require some accredited proof of their skill before they will trust themselves under their hands. And the churches have cried long enough: "It is so!" The people are beginning to answer: "Give us your proofs and we will believe you! We want something beyond mere conjecture. The subject is of too much importance to us. If you cannot tell us, we will find it out for ourselves."

And in proof of this, a certain Canon, in addressing his clergy the other day, told them plainly that if they refused to recognize the power and truth of Spiritualism, it would prove, before long, to be the greatest opponent the Church had ever had.

A well-known professional man wrote to me a few weeks ago: "I would like to believe in a Hereafter. I want to believe in it—it would make me a happier and more godly man to believe in it; but, though I hope it may be true, I have never received any proof that it is so, and the priests who have tried to inculcate it in me, have known no more than myself." Therein lies the evil and the truth! They know no more than ourselves. They can only quote the Bible and we can read it as well as they. Observe the inaccuracy of the Church's teaching on this subject. The Protestant Church, for a long time, denied that there could be such a thing as the return of those whom we call dead, and when it was forced, by the experiments and testimony of men of learning and science, to acknowledge it to be a fact, it ascribed the forces by which it operated as diabolical. Perhaps the Protestant Church may remember that there was a time when all the powers of nature, such as thunder and lightning, and earthquakes, were attributed to the devil—anything, in short, which people understood

as little as they do the science of Spiritualism. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, allows that it is both possible and true, but diabolical—*unless confined to the authority of herself*. Bernadotte, the little shepherd, who saw and spoke to an apparition of the Mother of Christ at Lourdes (which miracle led to the foundation of the celebrated healing grotto of Loretto), was exalted to a saint on account of her mediumistic powers. It was miraculous and angelical in her, but it would be diabolical and blasphemous in you or me. Bernadotte was only a rough, ignorant peasant child, no more holy than any urchin from our own board school, but she was an excellent physical medium, and I should have very much liked to have annexed and developed her. Did the Church permit her to remain in the world and exercise her undoubted powers for the enlightenment and regeneration of her fellow creatures? Nothing of the sort! It clapped her at once into a convent to keep them for itself. It declared that her vision was miraculous—that it came straight from God; but that when *I* see the apparition of my daughter Florence, who went into the spirit-world as an innocent baby of ten days old, I see a devil sent by the agency of the evil one, to damn my soul to hell! Do you believe such irrelevance? I don't. The priests know better than that, but they have no desire to raise the veil. If they admitted the teachings of Spiritualism and taught the people to seek counsel and advice of those who are nearer to God than any mortals can be, what further need of their own services? Were they to go hand in hand with their congregations in this, seeking with them and learning with them, they would find themselves far better fitted to teach the ignorant and the mourner where to find comfort and relief. The priests of the Catholic Church know all about it; but, from the first, they have

determined to keep it within the circle of their own authority. The Roman Catholic Church is a mass of Spiritualism—she teems with so-called miracles; the men and women who have witnessed them have been transformed into saints for their wonderful powers; but the knowledge must not be disseminated amongst the masses. The reason is obvious. The people would learn too much. They would no longer believe that a man's word could either condemn their souls to hell, or give them the entrance to heaven; they would begin to use the conscience which God has implanted in each one of our breasts for the purpose of warning us what to follow and what to avoid—they would, in one word, be *free*. I know that this is a most terrible sentiment to issue from the mouth of a Catholic; but if to be a Catholic is to be blind and deaf and dumb, I give up all claim to the title. After what God has given me to see and hear, I must speak, or I should, indeed, feel myself to be guilty. To return to my correspondents—my readers seem to imagine, in the first place, that as soon as a spirit is freed from its earthly body, it becomes a species of little god, endowed with supernatural powers of prophecy and foresight—able to advise on all mundane matters—to seek out and communicate with strange spirits of whom it has never heard before—to fly hither and thither, conveying messages and finding out secrets—that it is, in fact, at once divested of all its earthly attributes, and able to perform miracles—able, also, and willing to interest itself in the most trivial things, such as finding lost articles, reading the contents of wills, foretelling the winning racehorses, and divining the inmost thoughts of their friends and themselves. One gentleman in the West Indies requested me to "send the spirit of his dead wife" (of whom I had never heard before), at a certain hour, on a certain day, to him in Jamaica,

with due regard to the difference of time between the two countries, in order that she might advise him with regard to the bringing-up of their child.

What would he have thought if I had replied that if he would tell his dead mother to visit me first, I would try to get into communication with his wife? When will enquirers understand that mediums cannot *command* spirits, nor *control* them, nor *raise them up*, nor *order* them about in any way. They come to teach us—not to be treated like servants to run messages, or gratify idle curiosity. They are the higher powers—we, the lower. They, the preachers—we, the congregation.

Another man from America wrote me, that if my controls would tell him what was his real name (he signed himself by an assumed one), profession, age, complexion, and characteristics, he would become a Spiritualist. Such an enormous inducement for me to take any trouble in the matter! It is a person's own loss and that of no one else, if he misses being convinced of the truth of Spiritualism in this life. He will only be the less prepared for entering on another. We shall all be Spiritualists as soon as we are spirits.

A lady correspondent informed me that, for some time past, she had continually dreamed of a man unknown to her, until she had become convinced that he must exist on this earth somewhere, and if Spiritualism was of any use, my spirit friends should be able to trace him for her and bring them together for the purpose of marriage. Another lady wrote me she had three beautiful daughters—she described them all separately—but these lovely creatures had not yet been snapped up, and she desired me to send a spirit to look at them and tell her if they would marry, and, if so, whom and when.

Numerous requests like the following have reached me :

"I have lost a ring of value. Will you ask 'Florence' to tell me where it is?"

"My father died last year. Will you ask one of your controls where he is at present, and if he has any message to send me?"

"I was engaged to be married some time ago, but the engagement was broken off. Now I wish it renewed. Can you tell me if there is any chance of it, or if your spirits can influence my lover towards me?" Now, people who can make such requests as these, display the grossest ignorance of what Spiritualism is, or for what purpose it is permitted. As I have said before, spirits are not errand boys to be sent about at our bidding, to execute the orders of strangers, nor are they omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent, to be able to read all hearts, and influence all minds. To think of them in that light is to arrogate the attributes of the Almighty God for the humblest of his creatures. Neither is their mission to accelerate the opportunities of lovers, nor bring about matrimonial desirabilities. They come to demonstrate the fact that we shall live again—not to further the petty interests or to aggrandize the covetous and grasping natures of this world. And even if they did so, it would not be for utter strangers. Each helps its own. They are our guardian angels—their reward being the permission to watch over those they love, a reward sometimes deferred, in God's wisdom, for some time after they pass away from our sides. The gentlemen and ladies who wrote me such letters would doubtless be very much surprised if asked to do such things for their fellow creatures—why should they imagine that, once passed out of the body, they would feel more inclined to take such trouble for persons who had no claim on them? If you put the question to them personally, they murmur: "Oh! yes, of course, but then I thought that *spirits*," etc.

Which proves what I state, that the generality of people cannot grasp the fact that they—they, *themselves*, will exist in a spirit world; that spirit life is not *another* life, but a continuation of this; that they will not be altered in any particular for many years, perhaps, from what they may be when they pass over there; that the earthly man will be earthly still and the spiritual man will be spiritual still, and both will progress, in like measure, with the progress they have made whilst here at school below. We know that the lad who works to obtain knowledge, passes his examination and takes a higher place in college than the one who has been idle, or disobedient. So it is with us. The more spirituality we acquire below, the better fitted shall we be to enjoy a spiritual life above. You remember the two texts: "As the tree falleth, so shall it lie," and "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

They apply to the subject in hand, and I have been taught that every man remains as he passes away until he aspires to become better. But that may incur a bitter penance first.

But to set against the correspondence of such ignoramuses as I have quoted, who have not, perhaps, sufficient spirituality in themselves, to be able to realize the grand work the spirits of those gone before are allotted to do on earth, I have received communications that have made me doubly thankful that I had the courage of my opinions, in giving the record of my experiences to the world. For I must tell you that I did it in the face of much opposition and displeasure. Some of my nearest relatives warned me that if I published "There is no Death," I should be dubbed a madwoman, or a liar, and that my novels would

suffer in consequence. I was told that I should offend the mediums I had sat with and the company in which I had sat. I thought it all very probable, but still I argued that, having seen what I had seen, and heard what I had heard, I had no right to keep the truth from the world.

Those who believe my statements, will be glad to hear, I think, that my literary name has not suffered in any way from my audacity—on the contrary, the book has been received with more enthusiasm than anything I have ever written before—and that I have the happiness of knowing that it has conveyed comfort and belief to many a sorrowing heart. Mothers have spoken again with their children, husbands with their wives, friends have met friends, through my agency, and I thank God for it. More than this, men and women who never believed in anything before they read my book, have written me that for the first time, they felt they could reconcile God's mercy with His justice. Some of the Catholic papers have published abusive articles against me; but as they were written by one of my nearest relations, it is not to be wondered at, for a man's foes are ever those of his own household, and especially when the man has been successful. But what time had I to think, even, about newspaper articles, when I had the supreme pleasure to receive a letter like the following? A young soldier wrote it me from the Cape. I have no authority to mention his name; but I know, in consideration of all the pleasure he has given me, he will pardon my giving a few extracts from his letter here:

"I ask your acceptance of the deepest and purest gratitude for the good work you are doing in the cause of Spiritualism, and for the help, personally, your work has been to me. Not only do I tender this on my own behalf, but on that of many others, united with me in the bond of a common faith, but who, like myself, the exigencies of

fate, or circumstances, have scattered, far and wide, to remote corners of the globe, where ideas keep pace with the actions of those about us, and creep on all fours; where the sunbeams of advanced thought have not, as yet, penetrated the gloomy, cobwebby recesses of old-time notions, old-time ignorance and bigotry; where the refining, softening influences of civilization are wanting. I have just closed the pages of your latest and greatest work (for such it may be called) "There is no Death," and laid the book reverently aside, with a feeling of wonderment, and a sigh of gratitude. It has exerted a strange influence over me. This influence has elevated me above myself—drawn to the front some of that better self (a casual visitor only, and then in dreams far apart), a little of whom still remains, despite the malodorous atmosphere of a soldier's life—made me, in fact, a better man. Yet this is merely an individual experience, and nothing in comparison to the full and glorious effect your book is creating on the thinking world. The more one learns of Spiritualism, particularly of the phases you describe, the more one becomes horrified at the natures of the majority of those around us, especially so in the life I am now leading. Miserable, blighted ruins—stunted, deformed, suffocated soul natures—moribund in decaying walls of the bodily prison, natures to whom to compare the brutes of the field were a calumny upon nobler animals. You are nobly spreading that knowledge, the light of which alone can revive the smouldering soul embers of such creatures. * * * * * In baring your heart to the world, and penning your wonderful experiences, in the interest of pure truth and advancement—scorning the adverse criticisms of an incredulous public, none, save such as we, can thoroughly appreciate the great help which your influence will give to the cause, and the permanent good

which will arise therefrom. Humanity owes you a debt of gratitude which can never be fully repaid in this life, but which assuredly will be placed to your credit in the life beyond. Will you accept the hearty thanks of a soul in the wilderness, for the good you have done him? Never before have I so fully realized the divine, beautiful nature of faith, and its power for good, as since reading 'There is no Death.'" * * * * * *

From settlers in the Bush; from soldiers under the tropical sun of India; from clergymen in the wilds of Canada; from American cousins over the Atlantic; from brothers and sisters of all grades, I have received the same gratifying assurances that the public acknowledgment of my belief in Spiritualism has given comfort and hope to many, and courage to enquire into the truth of the doctrine; but all have asked me to give them more information on the subject which is of such vital importance to us all. In "There is no Death" I purposely confined my reminiscences to *my actual personal experience.* I felt that, in vouching for the truth of so important a matter to the public, I had no right to repeat anything but what I could swear, if need be, that I had seen and heard with my own eyes and ears. But the case is now altered. I think the majority, at least, of my readers are convinced that what I have already written is the truth, and they have, of themselves, demanded more explicit details how they may pursue the paths I have and obtain the same peace. And I feel I have no right to withhold anything that I may be able to tell them.

My correspondence has been, on the whole, so gratifying and complimentary, that I feel I have nothing but thanks to give the writers—yet, one or two have annoyed me, unwittingly, I am sure, by asking if all I related in "There is no Death" was true, or whether it were not a cleverly

concocted romance. (This was actually the term used by more than one of my correspondents.) Now, I thought I stated as plainly as I could, in my opening chapter, that I was relating the actual experience of my life; but who, that credits me with being a woman, could suspect me of trifling with so solemn a subject as the bruised and bleeding hearts of my fellow-creatures? Surely, no one who has himself experienced the awful, unspeakable agony of losing a beloved friend by death. If reiteration be necessary, let me reiterate, here, the every incident related in "There is no Death" occurred to me *just as I wrote it down*, and that they were not written from memory, but from notes taken at the time.

Others of my acquaintance have asked me if I was sure, considering the long time that, in some instances, has elapsed since the marvels I wrote of took place, if my senses had not deceived me, or if I remembered distinctly what happened. To these I can only return the same answer, *i. e.*, that notes were made of all the events at the time, and better still, perhaps, that similar experiences are occurring to me every day.

Others again have written to ask me if I were not hypnotized at the seances I describe, and only imagined I saw what I relate. What! thirty or forty people hypnotized at the same moment, some to see a friend—others a stranger, in one and the same form. One, to be moved to tears at the recognition of his father or mother, and the other to sit by indifferently, because he had no part in the joy of his next neighbor. It is only the would-be wise, but wholly ignorant, who would attempt to account for the phenomena on such grounds. No man of science would do so, and I venture to say that no man, scientific, or otherwise, who has once commenced seriously to study the subject of Spiritualism, ever tries to explain it all. If they are

not satisfied of its genuineness, they remain neuter. They cannot argue it away, nor will they ever be able to do so. That clever paper, "Truth," got to the very bottom of the well the other day in publishing an article on my assertions regarding the reappearance of my step-son Francis Lean, entitled "Miss Marryat's Bogus Bogey."

I did not notice it at the time for several reasons, one being that I very much dislike a newspaper war. I intend to go into it, however, in the course of this book, and prove to you that "Truth," however credible in itself, accepted in this instance the testimony of a witness who is *not* credible.

"Francis" and "Florence" and "Dewdrop" and "Goodness" are not visions of the past, only, but intimate friends in the present, with many more added to them, who assemble round me year by year, as I see and learn more of the divine science which makes the pleasure and comfort of my life. Numerous persons have come forward since my book was published, professing to have mastered all the wonders of Spiritualism, and various works have come out, on the subject. But let me repeat here what I said before, that it is not a matter to be taken up as a pastime, nor is it to be learned and proved in a day. They are plenty of hysterical people ready to declare that they have seen spirits, or had their hands guided by the dead, and who are generally prepared to teach their grandmothers to suck eggs, or, in other words, to sit in the high places as prophets, before they have mastered the A B C of the faith they profess to hold. Spiritualism is not to be learned, nor its advantages gained, without perseverance and patience, and study, and outlay. People come to me, sometimes, all eagerness to find out if Spiritualism be true—anxious, so they tell me, to be convinced of the after-life of those they have loved here—longing to believe in eternity, and a future ex-

istence, and begging me to tell them where they can go in order to prove it for themselves. I give them the name and address, perhaps, of a medium whom I know to be above suspicion, and tell them the expense they will be put to. They cry : "O ! but that is such a prohibitive price." They will pay their half guinea cheerfully any night to see "Charley's Aunt," (and I think "Charley's Aunt" is quite worth it)—but it is too much for a proof of everlasting life ! People of this sort are not Spiritualists, they are sight-seers; they want to go to seances from simple curiosity, and they would far better keep away.

I have not much faith myself in the good of all the proposals one hears for the founding of Colleges for Spiritualism. They may attract attention to the doctrine, but I doubt if they will further it, as it should be furthered. They will lapse into so many churches for another religion, and wherever money and subscriptions are made the principal outlook, religion falls to the ground. The chief reason that the Christian religion has fallen into such disrepute of late years that the clergy cannot fill their churches, is because it has to be so heavily paid for. All religion should be free. Let our Spiritualism be in ourselves and our own families. There is the only altar on which it will bring forth fruit. Did the Christ return to earth in this generation, he would pull down the churches and turn their worshipers into the streets, as he turned the money-changers out of the Temple. What do the majority in the Nineteenth Century do, but turn his Father's House into a den of thieves? If we all held an indubitable belief in, and conviction of, the truth of another life, we should need no churches, but those in our own bodies, which the knowledge of our Father's love would transform into temples for the Holy Ghost. To be undoubtedly certain that we shall live again—to know from

the only real proof we can have, namely, the return of the dead, that we shall pass from this life to another, far more beautiful, would be to live as in the presence of God and those we love. An universal belief in Spiritualism would do what all the churches in the world, and all the religions they have carved out for us, have failed to do—it would transform a blaspheming, adulterous, murdering, back-biting, lying and thieving crew, into a band of thankful and adoring children, cognizant of their Maker's love and patient of the accidents which may be against them in this world, because, assured of passing on to another—acknowledging what very few of them do now, that His dispensations in removing their dearest ones out of their sight for awhile, are all for the best, since they know for certain not only that they will be reunited to them before long, but that even whilst in this world they may be solaced by their presence and the knowledge that they still love and wait for them.

Why should we grieve so terribly "as those without hope," when we lose our friends by death, and yet bear, with comparative composure, their departure for another country, where they will be lost to our sight and hearing, and perhaps be exposed to all sorts of dangers from sickness and traveling? Must there not be something at fault in a religion which leaves us a prey to our own surmisings and fears—which has no power to make us trustful and confident for our own future and the future of our friends? Would not the belief that they can revisit us, and see what we are doing, make the survivors somewhat more careful how they behaved, knowing that those they mourn, could be grieved still by their misdoing? * * * "Knowing we are encompassed by a mighty cloud of witnesses."

And still the cry of the children of earth is: "Show us

our dead." The atheist says: "Prove to me there is a God, and I will believe in Him."

The careless liver: "Prove that this world does not end all, and I will see some good in abandoning my evil ways, and living a purer life." The mourner: "Let me believe that I shall meet my child; or my father, or my mother again, and I will be patient and resigned, instead of reckless."

Well, then, dear friends—dear fellow-sufferers—(for I have suffered as much as you have)—let me try in my poor way to prove it to you. Let me show you, to the best of my ability and with the assistance of my spirit friends, how to set to work to do what I have done—how, that is, to open communication with those who have gone before you, so that they may be able to convince you that they live, and that you have only to wait a little longer before you will live with them again—that to that other world, which will seem so natural to you when you enter it, you will carry your own heaven, or your own hell, just as you will have made it for yourselves, whilst here below—that there there is no torture designed for you by an All-Merciful Father, from the beginning of the world, but only that which you make for yourselves by the non-exercise, or repression of the natural love He has implanted in your breasts, for the benefit of your fellow-creatures. Come with me and let us argue out the matter together, and find how we may best prove my theory to be the truth. Remember that it is of as great moment to me, as to you. I am just as anxious as you may be, to learn the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." If I have been deceived for five-and-twenty years (which I conceive to be impossible), I am just as ready, on being convinced of my self-deception, to give it all up now, as I was when my investigations were only two weeks old. The great thing for

both you and me, and every one is—not to think of this, or believe that—but to find out the truth for ourselves. Evidently the churches have not taught it us. If Spiritualism is a truth, why have we been kept in ignorance of it? Why has the fact been denied to us over and over again?

By whose authority was it, that the ministers of the Established Church declared it, but a few years back, to be a ridiculous fable, and now almost all of them confess it to be a truth, and many preach it from the pulpit? Are we infants that the secrets of nature are to be kept back from us? Let us have more courage. Let us resolve to know everything and judge for ourselves. If we find Spiritualism does us harm—prevents our doing our duty in this world, or saps our health and strength—by all means abandon its pursuit, for it is not for us. But if it gives us comfort and pleasure; more faith in the goodness of God, and courage to do the work He has appointed us on earth, then cling to it as the greatest solace He has allotted man. And now let me take you by the hand, as it were, and show you why *I* believe it to be an unmitigated blessing.

CHAPTER II.

THE CURE FOR DEATH.

I should like to speak to you first of death—that change which to most of you is a nightmare of terror, but which, in reality, should be the gladdest event of all your life. This unnatural dread of a change as natural as being born, is one of the best proofs we have, of the little good that has been effected by the religions of the world—of how little real influence they have exerted on the comprehensions and souls of men—for if they had had the power to make their proselytes realize the truth of their teachings, the expected glories of heaven would have done away with the fear of death, and the terrors of hell with the vices of humanity. But neither one effect, nor the other, has been the result of eighteen hundred years of preaching and praying. Why should we fear death in our own persons so much, that in the majority of instances, we cannot summon up courage even to sit down and look the "bogey" of our childhood straight in the face? We know that it is inevitable—that it *must* happen to all of us. Our lives are as varied as ourselves. Some of us are born to prosperity, others to misfortune; some to health, others to disease; some to attain the highest honors, or to occupy the proudest positions in this world, others to live and die in obscurity. But, sooner or later, we must all come to the same end—that end, which equalizes the king with the pauper; which turns the body of the young, rich and noble Duke of Clarence, lying in his crimson velvet-covered coffin in the mausoleum in St. George's chapel, at

Windsor, into precisely the same dust, no finer nor less objectionable, than that of the last half-starved and diseased cripple who was bundled out of a workhouse cart, into the overladen public grave, that already held a dozen such as he.

Death is not like the typhoid fever, nor the smallpox, which we may hope, by care or precaution, to escape or overcome. It is inevitable—we must all pass through it. Yet the majority put the thought away from them, as something not to be alluded to; they shudder when they hear it mentioned. That with which they must all become acquainted, is thrust out of sight, as if it were their greatest enemy; that which their religion teaches them is but the entrance to an eternity of happiness is avoided as if it were, indeed, the beginning of the typical hell, which has been thrust down their throats, with no better effect than to make them dread the idea of passing into the presence of their Heavenly Father. Now, is the fault here, in the religion, or in the teaching? If they believe the religion, why do they fear death? If they do *not* believe the religion, is it because, in their inmost hearts, they feel it is not true—that heaven and hell, as they have been represented to us, are "bogies," set up, the better to keep us under the thumbs of our spiritual pastors and masters, and to prevent our enquiring and learning for ourselves? If you read the history of the churches, you will find that, from the beginning, the people have ever been exhorted to place their judgments and consciences into the hands of the ministers, and that it is not only the Roman Catholic Church who has arrogated to herself the virtue of infallibility. Each, in its own way, has done the same, from the Calvinistic Church, with its horrible doctrine of election by grace, to the lowest psalm-singing conventicle, whose teacher shrieks hell fire and everlasting burning

into the ears of its ignorant congregation. But, thank God, there is a better and more reasonable view of the matter than these, and if Spiritualism served no higher purpose than to dismiss this causeless fear of death, and what comes after it, from the minds of men, it would accomplish what *nothing else before it has ever done.*

A great deal of this unnatural dread of death has been inculcated in our minds from our childhood, but it has all arisen from the same cause—the futility of religion to convince us of the reality of the beautiful life to which we are hastening. From our tenderest years, we cannot remember hearing the subject mentioned, except with lowered voice and bated breath. One of my earliest recollections is of being dragged by an ignorant nursemaid to see all the funerals that took place in an adjoining churchyard—of watching the mourners in their sable garments, of seeing the black plumes and weepers—of hearing the clay clods rattle down upon the coffin and wondering what the ghastly face, hid underneath it, looked like—to say nothing of having the occasion improved for me, the very next time I could not go to sleep as quickly as my nurse desired, by being told that if I didn't shut my eyes directly, she would tell the dead men to come and carry me away to the churchyard.

I had a very pious mother—pious according to the fables she had been taught to receive as truth—but not a word did she ever say to me in those childish days to mitigate the sense of fear inspired in my breast, by that with which it pleases Christians, with the hope of "a joyful resurrection," to surround their funeral ceremonies—not a word of the happy state of the enfranchised soul, who was viewing those ceremonies, perhaps, with "the proud contempt of spirits risen." I saw nothing but the yawning grave and the weeping countenances, and heard nothing but the sobs

of the mourners ; or, if the subject were mentioned afterwards, it was with those terrible old accompaniments of the bottomless pit, or an alternative, almost as bad, of singing psalms for ever and ever, before a great white throne.

A little brother of mine, called Willy, died at seven years old, long before I was born. My mother, who really was a good woman after her lights, often told me how distressed she was, because, as the poor child was dying of inflammation of the bowels, which creates an unquenchable thirst, and she was disturbing his last moments by a description of the heaven, which she supposed he was about to enter, he raised himself upon his elbow and exclaimed: "I don't want to go there ! I want some beer !"

Poor mother ! She actually believed that our dear, tender Father, God, would punish an infant of seven years for speaking such blasphemy, and that if little Willy ever entered her mythical and most undesirable heaven, it would only be after being purified as by fire. But she knows better now. She passed over more than ten years' agony, and the first words she said to me, on coming back, were : "Oh ! it is all so different from what I imagined, so very, *very* different."

Charles Dickens, who displays his own tender nature in every line he has written, has shown what *he* thinks of this tampering with children's fears, by the words he puts into the mouth of Nurse Polly, in "Dombey and Son." When the poor, little, neglected Florence asks her : "What have they done with my mamma ?" she answers :

"Once, upon a time, there was a lady—a very good lady —and her little daughter loved her."

"A very good lady and her little daughter loved her," repeated the child.

"Who, when God thought it right it should be so, was taken ill and died."

The child shuddered.

"Died, never to be seen again by any one on earth, and was buried in the ground where the trees grow."

"The cold ground," said the child, shuddering again.

"No! the warm ground," returned Polly, seizing her advantage, "where the ugly little seeds turn into beautiful flowers, and into grass and corn, and I don't know what all, besides. Where good people turn into bright angels and fly away to heaven."

The child who had drooped her head raised it again, and sat looking at her intently.

"So, when this lady died, wherever they took her, or wherever they put her, she went to God! and she prayed to Him, this lady did," said Polly, affecting herself beyond measure, being heartily in earnest, "to teach her little daughter to be sure of that in her heart, and to know that she was happy there, and loved her still, and to hope and try—O! all her life—to meet her there one day, never, never, never to part any more!"

"It was my mamma!" exclaimed the child, springing up and clasping her round the neck.

I have always thought this one of the most touching passages its great author ever wrote.

Now, one of the principal objects of Spiritualism is, to make this death, which you dread so much, less horrible to you; to prove that it is as natural as living on this earth, being but a continuation of nature; that there *is* no death, in fact (in the sense we have been taught to regard it), but only a second birth to a second sphere of action. It will show you that you fear too much, because you know too little, and that Spiritualism is a light that will make life easier for you to bear, and death more welcome.

I do not wish for one moment to depreciate the awful agony attendant on losing our friends by death. That is

quite another matter, from dreading it on our own account. It is the greatest trouble which this life holds, but even that is much alleviated by the knowledge that there is only a thin veil between us and those whom we have lost from sight. I suppose there is not a creature who will read these pages, who has not gone through it—not one, who has not stood beside the dying bed of a father, or a mother; a brother, or a sister; a husband, or a wife; or, worst, and cruelest grief of all—a child!

For it is only in the course of nature, that our parents should pass away before ourselves, and it is an equal chance whether brother, or sister, husband, or wife, should be the first to go. But the children we have brought into the world—the infants we have nourished at our breasts—the youths and maidens we have watched blossom to maturity—O, Mothers! I appeal to you if there is a greater agony under heaven, than to see our children die? To watch the hands which we have never failed to assist, stretched out to us for help in vain; to see the dear eyes glazing beneath the dread decree; to try and catch the last faint whispered words; to hear the sobbing breath drawn with more difficulty at each labored inspiration, and then, before you have realized that he is close at hand, to know that the destroyer has come—that all is over; that the warm, living child you have held to your heart night after night—bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh—is gone forever, has become a lump of clay, without sense, or speech, or motion, and that in a few days, however tightly your fond arms may be clasped about it, they will take even *that* from you, and thrust it into the dark, damp earth, and leave it there, to become putrid and noisome and revolting.

O! that awful burial, when the heavy clods of earth rattle down upon the lid of the coffin, that holds your dead

darling, as if they would burst it in, and you call out, as if your feeble remonstrance could arrest the ceremonial, and your heart grows sick within you, as you feel there is nothing to be done, but to submit.

God, who ordained death as the means by which His children should pass to a purer and more progressive existence, alone knows the agony they have undergone whilst viewing it in the persons of those they love.

And then the sense of desolation that follows.

Do you remember what it was to return home? To mark the empty chair, the vacated bed, the familiar possessions left behind, and to feel that the dear arms would never twine around your neck again; that the voice you loved to listen to, was silenced forever; that the eyes you gazed in with delight, were closed and dull; that your child had left you; that he was lying in his narrow coffin under the cruel sods, out in the cold and the frost and the rain, and you would see him never more, until you had passed through the dread mystery yourself.

Did you not lie awake at night, sobbing instead of sleeping; peering with your inflamed eyes into the impenetrable darkness; yearning for the "touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still"—feeling that you would give anything, and dare anything, only to hear one word, to see one glimpse, that would convince you that your beloved had not gone utterly beyond the reach of your affection and your tears?

Poor mourner! To whom did you go for consolation in your terrible affliction? To your minister? What did he tell you?

Doubtless, he was very kind, and pitied the grief he had no power to assuage. He talked to you of a shadowy, indistinct, undefinable heaven, situated, *he knew not where*, governed by what laws, *he would not tell*, subject to

what conditions, *he did not know!* A jumbled, misty idea of a city, paved with gold, and situated above the clouds; a place where innocent infants, if unsprinkled with water by the hand of man, may not enter; but where hoary-headed, old sinners, and murderers, who cry with their last frightened breath, "I believe!" are gladly welcomed; a place where, God's mercy being illimitable, you may trust and hope your child has found admittance.

Did that comfort you? Did that take away one thought of the dark grave, and the narrow coffin, and the fair features and rounded limbs turning livid with decay?

And if your lost darling had not been a child—if, on the contrary, he were a thoughtless young man, who had never done much good, or much evil, in his short life, what did the minister say then? Where did his theories consign the unawakened? Did he not shake his head, and keep his mouth shut, and leave you more hopeless and despairing than before?

It was not his fault—he did his very best to comfort you—but he knew no better. How should he, whilst he belongs to a community that lays down hard and fast rules for its members, and permits no man to think, or speak, except with the mind, or the mouth, of whoever may be set in authority over him? Of all the people in this world, the parsons, priests and ministers, are the ones who want instruction most in Spirituality. They are truly the blind leading the blind, and tumbling into the ditch of ignorance with their followers.

And had your friends any more satisfactory consolation to give you? Did they not help you to hurry everything that should remind you of the trial you had gone through, out of sight, and advise you to try change of scene and air, and say it was useless to sit down and nurse your grief—

that weeping would not bring back the dead, and that your duty was to the living?

And you fell down on your knees, perhaps, half maddened by their sophistries, and stretched out your empty arms to heaven and called on God to tell you why He had ever created your child, or yourself, only to leave you a prey to such unutterable misery.

What would you have said if, at that supreme moment, you could have heard the voice you believed silenced forever, say "Mother!"—if you could have turned your head to see the dear, familiar form standing beside you, not dazzling in its brightness, and set apart from you by an angelic radiance, but clothed as it was on earth—looking and speaking as it used to look and speak, only with all the sadness and sickness swept away, with no taint of death, or corruption on it, but beaming with life in every limb and feature?

Would not such a sight, however short a time it might have lasted, have done more to dry your tears, than all the priests' theories, or your friends' advice? Would not that single word "Mother" have comforted you more and convinced you of God's goodness more than a thousand sermons could have the power to do, and sent you to your knees again in gratitude that you had been vouchsafed *the only proof that can be infallible* of life beyond the grave.

This is what I have been privileged to see—what thousands beside myself have seen—the blessing I long to convince every soul to be an indisputable fact, that the dead are *not* gone beyond the reach of those who love them. Let us look at the matter from a reasonable point of view: We are told in the scriptures, that God ordained death as a punishment for sin. For myself, I do not believe this statement. I do not believe that God ever intended us to

die, or sin, or be sick or sorry. We have brought these evils upon ourselves, just as we bring our hell, or heaven, on ourselves by the use, or misuse, of the life, which God intended to be eternal on this earth. The fact remains, however, that we die, and that the doom was pronounced on us, at the same time that the ground was cursed for man's sake, and the woman was promised sorrow in her conception. Yet what blessings lay beneath these curses. Blessings which were not for the future only, but followed immediately in their wake. Man was condemned to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, but how sweet is the bread thus earned! The rich man, whose money has been bequeathed him by his forefathers, does not derive half the pleasure from spending it, that they did in earning it. What profit we derive from labor! The *want* of work is turned into the curse to-day!

And the mother, who brings forth her child in pain and anguish! Will any one deny *her* consolation? It is the childless woman with whom we are called on to sympathize. The mother grows prouder and prouder with each fresh curse the Lord may lay upon her. And do you imagine that God would have left death—the bitterest and sorest punishment that we have brought upon ourselves—without its remedy, even in this world?

The Churches' indistinct and shadowy heaven, with its white-robed inhabitants, most reprehensibly wasting eternity by twanging their harps, has never really afforded it to us. We have strained our poor eyes to the unfathomable ether where it is said to be situated, and tried to realize it, and hoped it might be true, but when all was said and done, it was only conjecture, and the preachers of our faith cannot deny that it is so. They tell us all they can, but what does it amount to? They read their bibles, and we read ours, and one knows as much as the other! And the

world still cries for proof: "Show us our dead! Give us a certainty of a life to come!"

Spiritism, then, is the cure for the worst thing we have brought upon ourselves. God knows that we have sinned—that with sin came death; but He will not leave us comfortless. All things in His nature combine to produce a beautiful harmony, so that the remedy is never far from the disease, and He has ordained that the dockleaf Spiritism shall grow beside the stinging-nettle death—the leaf which we can pluck, even in this life, and lay best against our bleeding hearts—the balm which will heal the aching wound, and teach us patience and resignation under our temporal loss, with a certainty of reunion in the world beyond.

The dead are not dead! They stand in our midst to-day! I, who write these words to you, have seen them, conversed with them, handled them ; and I would not part with the knowledge thus gained, for all the good the world could give me.

I allow it is not the common experience that it should be. For centuries it has been banned by the churches and thrust out of sight as an unclean thing. Fear is the rod with which they have ruled the people, and with the ignorant, it has, in a great measure, succeeded. But Spiritism is nothing new. It has been since the world began. Of late years it has been coming to the front, and it will come more and more, to the front, as men throw off the yoke and ignorance of the past, and have the courage of their own opinions. The law forbids their taking money for the exposition of their mediumship, and, under present circumstances, it is a good and wholesome law, because the curiosity to enquire into the truth of Spiritism is so great, that it puts a premium upon chicanery. But no amount of chicanery can alter the fact that the

spirits of those gone before us, are amongst us, as we move through the world. Were every medium ever heard of, to turn out to be a fraud—were every church in the kingdom to topple to the ground—Spiritism would still remain a truth, because it existed long before any mediums or churches were thought of, and its practice was sanctioned by God himself, and practiced by his people.

The knowledge that when our friends pass from our sight, they are not carried away to an unattainable sphere, whence no communication can take place between us, but are permitted, under certain circumstances, to revisit this earth, and comfort us by the sense of their presence, has been revealed to some of the humblest of the human race, and believed in by many of the highest. You can have no idea, until you have enquired into the matter, what thousands of people hold this comforting doctrine in England, America and the whole world, though few are courageous enough to acknowledge their belief openly. The notion that the dead cannot return—that all stories of ghosts and apparitions are invented to scare the superstitious—has been so imbued in their minds, that they dread the ridicule that may be cast on their belief to the contrary. But amongst those who have boldly and openly avowed what they believed to be true, proved to be true, there are names on the roll beside which the cleverest and most far-seeing of mortals need not be ashamed to inscribe their own.

I need only enumerate such men as S. C. Hall, William Crookes, Professor Tyndall, Sir Edwin Arnold, Professor Huxley, the poet Longfellow, Alfred Wallace, Gerald Massey, Lord Brougham, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Lytton, Archbishop Whateley, John Wesley, and a hundred others, to prove that if Spiritists err, they err in excellent company.

But since many of my readers may hold a sincere faith

in the authenticity of the Scriptures, I will try to convince them, first of all, that Spiritism is not only lawful, but that it is founded on the practice of the Bible; that it was permitted and encouraged of God; and that it is man's increasing wickedness and worldliness, alone, that caused the spirits to refrain, because of their inability to hold converse with humanity.

For centuries, Spiritualism has been banned by the Church, and thrust out of sight as an unclean thing. The Church which encourages the State in upholding laws which are totally opposed to the teaching of its professed Master Christ; which solemnizes marriages which are nothing less than prostitution; which permits divorce, capital punishment, actions at law; winks at simony, and allots enormous revenues to its bishops and archbishops, whilst the poor rot and starve—this same Church forbids us to have any communication with spirits, who are the very first to denounce its corrupt practices. But Spiritualism is nothing new. It began when the world began. The knowledge that, when our friends pass from our sight, they are not immediately carried away to an unattainable country, whence no communication can evermore take place between us, but are permitted, under certain circumstances, to revisit this earth, and comfort us by the sense of their presence, has been revealed to some of the humblest of the human race, and is believed in by many of the highest. You can have no idea, until you have enquired into the matter, how many thousands of people hold this comforting doctrine—in England, America, Australia, and the whole world—their gross number being estimated at eleven millions. But, were I to convince you that Spiritualism is true, and comforting, and the sole proof we can have of immortal life, you might still tell me (as others have done), that, even if you be-

lieve all this, you consider it to be wrong. *Wrong* to speak to those whom God gave us for our own! *Wrong*, for the husband to speak to the wife who was one flesh with him; for the mother to speak to the child she brought into the world! This is the most incredible objection to me of all. Say that you don't want to meet your dead friends again; that you are frightened out of your wits at the mere idea of seeing a disembodied spirit; say you have left off weeping for them; that their place is filled by another; that there are thoughts and feelings, and intentions in your heart that you would not care to submit to their investigation—but don't tell me that you consider it wrong. For, if Spiritualism is wrong, God is wrong, and the Christ is wrong, and the Bible is wrong, and you have nothing left to cling to, for time or eternity! I'll tell you *what* is wrong. Men and women are wrong! Their passions, their proclivities, their hearts, their inclinations are wrong, and the majority leave this world wrong, and come back to it wrong, to such as would encourage them to do so. If ever you hear a person talk of receiving evil communications through Spiritualism, or of hearing evil actions spoken lightly of by spirits, you may be sure that man's, or that woman's nature is evil, and coarse, and sensual, and attracts like to like. It can only attract such spirits as stand on the same plane as itself, and such a person would choose coarse-minded associates from this world, as it would from the next. Do you suppose that, directly a spirit leaves the body, it becomes purified and angelic? How many people that pass away from amongst us are fitted to become angels? What becomes of the murderers and thieves, the licentious and cruel, the blasphemous, and liars? Do you imagine that they do not possess the same facilities for revisiting earth as the pure-minded and good? Much more so; for, being gross

and carnal, their spirits assimilate more easily with earth particles. This is why it behooves us, in this, as in all things, to be most careful. But, because there is evil, are we to reject the good? Because there are murderers and blasphemers living in this world, are we to cease to hold communion with those whom we love and esteem? The first thing you must learn to believe regarding the disembodied spirits is, that their return to this world is not supernatural. *There is no such thing as super-nature!* Their life in the spheres is but a continuation of their life on this earth. Our spirits are like birds confined in cages. Their cage doors have been set open—ours are still shut. But we can hold communion through the bars. The laws for your moral guidance upon earth hold good for your spiritual guidance, with regard to those who have left it. You would not hold familiar intercourse with thieves and drunkards, whilst here. Don't do it when they have gone over there. Remember Saint John's injunction on this subject: "Beloved! believe not every spirit, but *try the spirits,* whether they be of God." * * *

I have said that, if to pursue the science of Spiritualism is wrong, God and the Bible must both be wrong. This may appear a very bold assertion on my part, but I am prepared to uphold it. Many of my readers may hold a sincere belief in the authenticity of the Scriptures, and found their objection to Spiritualism on the fact that their teachers have taught them that the Bible forbids its practice. Now, it is for such people that I am writing, and I will undertake to prove to them, on the testimony of the Bible itself, that their teachers are wrong; that Spiritualism is not only lawful, but that it was permitted and encouraged of God, and that it is man's increasing wickedness, alone, that has caused spiritual guidance to be heard of less amongst us. I will prove to them that every

phase of it—the direct voice, levitation, trance-mediumship, automatic writing, materialization, clairvoyance and healing, are all mentioned, practiced, and approved of, in the Bible. Also, that there is but one miracle mentioned there, that has not been reproduced by the mediums of the present century. In addition, that there is nothing to be wondered at in the fact, since it was prophesied that it should be so.

CHAPTER III.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE BIBLE.

In the first place, in reading the Scriptures by the light of Spiritualism, we are struck by a remarkable circumstance. In the early books of the Bible, the converse of spirits with men is commonly spoken of, not as a miracle, but an every-day occurrence. As the world increased, however, and its inhabitants became hardened, and rebellious, the appearance of spirits is only mentioned as an occasional event, and then permitted in order to bring some hardened offender, like Belshazzar, to his senses. They were there amongst them still, no doubt, but man's eyes and ears had waxed too gross and carnal to see and hear them. But when human wickedness had seemed to have reached its height, and God's wrath was hot against His ungrateful people, the spirits come to the fore again, and the prophets' writings are full of nothing else. If we begin at the beginning, and glance through the Old Testament, we shall find that Spiritualism began when the Lord God (Who is the first of all spirits) walked in the "cool of the day," in the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve, and their eyes (unblinded, as yet, by grossness and carnality and infidelity) were able to see Him, and they held converse with Him.

Did it ever strike you to question why God came in the cool of the day? The cool of the day, in the East, means darkness. There is no twilight there. As soon as the sun sets, it is night. Do you remember that, when God created the earth, "darkness" was on the face of the waters; that when Moses desired to see the Lord, the answer was, "I

will come unto thee in a thick cloud"; that, in the same book of Exodus, it is written: "the thick darkness where God was"?

These texts, and many others like them, have been drummed into our ears from our earliest childhood, before we had any minds with which to understand them, until they have lost all their real meaning for us, and have to be read by a new light before we can properly comprehend them. We are brought up to consider it a duty to read a portion of the Bible every day, and we go over the same chapters again and again, until we know them by heart. If any one, who has been accustomed to this habit, would lock his Bible away for a few months, and then take it out, and peruse it from end to end, as he would any other history, he would be astonished to find how differently he would regard it. I want my readers to recall these remarks when I allude to them further on.

Spiritual intercourse was so common in those early days, that the sons of God, even, saw that the daughters of men were fair, and took them wives of all that they chose. Abraham entertained three angels, whom he believed to be men, so materialized were they, and they ate and drank with him, and rested themselves in his tent. So, also, did the two angels who came to Lot in Sodom, and saved him from the doomed city.

You will be told that these angels were spirits, who had been created by God as angels, and had never lived on earth, but it is only conjecture.

And even if the conjecture be a true one; if angels, who must be so much purer than any spirits who have left this earth, can come here and eat and drink, and converse with mortals, why not the more carnal spirits of men themselves? If you must believe anything without proof, believe the more likely solution of a miracle, and not the

less. It is far less reasonable to suppose that God would have sent His holy angels to be tainted by communication with mortals, than one of themselves.

There are four sorts of media mentioned in the Old Testament—prophets, seers, wise women, and interpreters of dreams. Amongst the latter is Joseph, one of the finest characters presented to us in the Bible, as when he was called upon to interpret the dreams of Pharoah, and his chief butler and baker. And when his father, Jacob, was dying, he said to his sons: "Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days"—which was simply an exercise of clairvoyance, so often given to the dying.

In Exodus, we are told how the Lord taught Moses to be what would be called in these days a conjurer. The burning bush; the rod which became a serpent; the hand that became leprous, and then turned back again into healthy flesh; the water that changed to blood when poured upon the land—what were these but acts of enchantment?

The story of Balaam's ass is too well known to be worth quoting here, but no sensible person can believe that the animal spoke with a tongue and palate that cannot naturally articulate sounds of speech. It was, of course, controlled for the time being by the angel who stood by it.

In the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, the people of Israel are warned against listening to a prophet, or dreamer of dreams, that shall try to turn them from worshiping God, proving that they were allowed to do so, if he advised them aright. In the first book of Samuel and the ninth chapter, we are given the story of Saul going with his servant to seek his father's lost asses. They cannot find them, and Saul advises returning home, lest his father should be uneasy. His servant replies: "Behold now, there is, in this city, *a man of God*, and he is an honorable

man, *all that he saith cometh surely to pass;* now let us go thither; peradventure, he can show us our way that we should go." Saul hesitates because he has no gift to offer the clairvoyant, but the servant answers: "I have here the fourth part of a shekel of silver; that will I give to the man of God, *to tell us our way.*"

So the men of God, you see, were not only permitted to tell people what was best to do, but to accept money for their services. Then comes this remarkable verse:

"Beforetime in Israel, when a man went *to enquire of God,* thus he spake, Come and let us go *to the seer:* for he that is now called a prophet, was before time called a seer."

Saul's servant took him to Samuel, who revealed his future to him, for it is said: "The Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came."

"And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer * * * *I will tell thee all that is in thine heart.*"

Now, here are the very things that the Church proclaims to be diabolical to-day, practiced by the men of God, whose histories are written for our encouragement and example. Is it reasonable? Will it hold water? If you have any brains or judgment of your own, decide for yourself whether, what was right and honorable in the time of Samuel, can be wicked and diabolical to-day, in the sight of a God, who "is the same, yesterday, to-day and forever."

Saul, it is presumable, afterwards became a medium himself, for, in the sixteenth chapter, we read that "an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." So that even "evil spirits" may be from the Lord, and certainly cannot approach us without His intention. "And it came to pass, when *the evil spirit from God* was upon Saul, that David took a harp and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

Saul was evidently possessed, for, in the eighteenth chapter, it is said that, when the spirit came upon him, he had a javelin in his hand, and threw it at David. And Saul sent messengers to take David, but "the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again, the third time, and they prophesied also."

So that it is plainly told us that prophecy, or clairvoyance, "foretelling the future," as we should call it now, was a gift of the Spirit of God.

That materialization is a fact, is proved by the visit of Saul to the witch of Endor, to ask her to raise up the spirit of Samuel for him, when Samuel appeared in the likeness he held on earth and spoke to Saul of what should happen. In the second book of Samuel, we are introduced to the wise woman of Tekoah, of whom not a word of blame is said, nor of Joab, for consulting her; and again during the siege of Beth-maachah, a wise woman spoke thus to Joab:

"They were wont to speak in old time, saying: They shall surely ask counsel at Abel, and so they ended the matter. I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel; thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?"

The woman, thereupon, counseled Joab aright, and her story finishes with these words: "Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom."

In the book of Kings, Solomon, himself, the wisest man in all the earth, is not only a dreamer and a visionary; but we read of Nathan foretelling the future; of Ahijah doing the same thing; and of the "man of God," who came out

of Judah and stood by Jeroboam by the altar, and when the king tried to lay hold of him, his hand was shriveled up, and then made whole again by his mysterious power. The king then asked the prophet to go home with him and take refreshment, but he declined because God had told him not to eat, nor drink, by the way. Mediums who eat and drink much in these days cannot procure good manifestations, and you will see, as my argument proceeds, that the manifestations of olden times, by whomever performed, were as subject to laws and conditions as the manifestations of to-day. A lying prophet, however (so there were lying mediums then, just the same as now), persuaded the man of God to disobey the orders he had received, and he paid the penalty with his life.

Next, Jeroboam's son, Abijah, fell sick, and he says to his wife: "Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam" (how often do not people disguise themselves, or try to do so, in the nineteenth century, when they go to consult a medium) "and get thee to Shiloh; behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child."

She obeys her husband, and Ahijah tells her of Jeroboam's coming doom, and that her child will die at her feet, before she can recross the threshold of her own home, which he does.

In the seventeenth chapter of the same book, we have the account of Elijah's prophecies, of the miracles he performed with the cruse of oil, and the barrel of meal for the widow of Zarephath, and how he restored her son to life— which would not be at all an uncommon miracle to-day, if it were tried directly after an apparent death; for the spirit,

in most instances, is united to the body for some little time after pulsation has ceased. "And the woman said to Elijah, now, *by this,* I know that thou art a man of God."

The life of Elijah is full of such stories. He is called a mighty prophet, because, when he opposed his power to that of the priests of Baal, the fire refused to burn their sacrifice, and fell down upon his. The late Mr. Home took not once, but dozens, perhaps hundreds of times, live fire from the grate, and held it in his hands, and placed it in those of his friends, without their being burned ; he even put a living, flaming coal into the long, white hair of dear, old Samuel Carter Hall, without leaving a trace of fire or singeing behind. But he was called a humbug for his pains ! One of the signs by which the Christ declared that his followers should be known, was the immunity with which they should handle such things.

"These signs shall follow them which believe (them *which believe,* remember, not only his disciples, and not only at that period), they shall cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover."

Now, which of the Church, *who believe,* has ever done such things? Has the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Pope of Rome? Could they take a live coal from the fire with their naked hands, and not be burned? But those whom the spirits help, can ! And who shall dare, after reading the text I have quoted, to say it is by the power of the devil? Truly, this is a stubborn and stiff-necked generation, which will believe only what it wishes to believe and would call Elijah a charlatan—yes ! even the priests who preach about him, would be the first to turn their backs on him, and say he had dealings with the evil one, if he

reappeared on earth and performed the miracles he did, whilst here before.

The people in those days must have kept their private mediums, for when Jehoshaphat wanted to consult Elijah, he said: "Get thee to the prophets of thy father and the prophets of thy mother."

But they were not always successful, for when the Shunnamite woman went to Elijah, after her son's death, he could not tell her errand: "The Lord hath hid it from me and hath not told me."

In the first of Chronicles, we read: "And the Lord spake unto God, David's seer"—as though David kept God for his private edification. Surely, had it been wrong, God would not have spoken through him. In another verse, we read that the angel appeared in the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, where Ornan and his four sons all saw him, and were much frightened, by which we may conclude that the angels' visits to men were now becoming few and far between. The world had become wicked and rebellious, and the simple faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was a thing of the past. What fellowship had the spirits with them? They thought only of their own bodies, and the means to aggrandize themselves. They would not have enjoyed spiritual intercourse, nor understood spiritual language. We hear scarcely anything more of angels, or spirits, until we come to the lamentations of the prophets (or seers), over the wickedness of mankind. Eliphaz, the Temanite, says to Job, indeed: "A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes, and I heard a voice, saying: Shall mortal man be more just than God?" but it is not till we come to Ezekiel that we read much of spirits again.

Then there appears to have been a rush of Spirituality upon the prophets, in order to arouse and warn the world. Ezekiel speaks familiarly of them.

"The spirit entered into me and set me on my feet."

"Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying: Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place. I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing. So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit, but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me. Then I came to them of the captivity of Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there, *astonished*, among them seven days."

This is a plain instance of levitation—an instance which is multiplied as the history goes on. In the twenty-fourth verse of the same chapter, he writes:

"Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house"—which shows that the spirit spoken of was a separate entity from Ezekiel, which took possession of his body, and spoke with his tongue, and it is not a figurative way of speaking of the spirit, or will of God, as some theologians try to argue. In fact, to listen to some men, one would think the whole object of their lives was to wrest all the words of Scripture into some meaning entirely opposite to what they sound like. If the Bible is the inspired word of God, and it is so incomprehensible that no one can understand it, except theologians, and each one of them interprets it differently, what is the meaning of the promise: "He who runs, shall read." What, indeed, we may say, was the good of God inspiring it, if He left it a hopeless jumble that only priests can make head or tail of?

How terribly the critics would be down upon a mortal writer who wrote exactly opposite from what he intended the public to understand. I often think the worst friends of the Almighty are those who profess to know all about Him. He does not exist, believe me, for the elect and the learned alone. He is for every one of His children, and if there is one word in the Scriptures which would lead the most ignorant astray, if left to his own interpretation, then the whole book is a fable and a mockery.

To resume my argument, in the thirteenth chapter of Ezekiel, we read: "Thus saith the Lord God: woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow *their own spirit,* and have *seen nothing,*" which argues that had they followed a spirit other than their own, they would have seen something. "They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, the Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them; and they have made others *to hope* that they would confirm the word."

Ergo: the Lord *did* send *some* mediums, who were authorized to make others to hope!

Enough of Ezekiel; we now come to Daniel, the holy man of God, whom even the lions would not touch. We are told: "Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep frake from him." As the magicians and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans failed to interpret his dreams, the pleasant old gentleman ordered the whole lot of wise men to be slain, including Daniel.

"Then Daniel went in unto the king, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation thereof," which he eventually did.

In the fifth chapter, we find that, when Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, saw the materialized hand come

forth, and write upon the wall, and was greatly troubled thereat, his queen said to him :

"There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, made *master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.* Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, and interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts were found in the same Daniel, now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation."

After which follows the well-known story of "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," which is perfectly intelligible to any one acquainted with clairvoyance, and the interpretation of dreams. There is one sentence in it, however, which, perhaps, no one but a spiritualist would notice. When Daniel has told the king that the warning has been sent him on account of his not having humbled his heart, he goes on, in the twenty-fourth verse, to say (having just spoken of Nebuchadnezzar, his father) : "Then was the part of the hand sent *from him;* and this writing was written."

Has any one before me noticed that the hand belonged to *King Nebuchadnezzar*, and, consequently, he appeared partly materialized to his son? But what price for Daniel, in the nineteenth century, if he were brought up, by any of the bigoted opposers of Spiritualism, before a city magistrate? He would get a year's imprisonment at the very least, or three months' hard labor, without the option of a fine. Yet, that seems strange in a Christian country, that pins its faith on "the Bible, and nothing but the Bible," considering that Daniel practiced his illegal arts by God's orders and under His instructions.

The prophet, it seems, fasted also, the same as mediums do in these days, when he wished to see visions.

"In those days, I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh, nor wine, in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel, then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body, also, was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." * * * "Yet, heard I the voice of his words, and when I heard the voice of his words, then *was I in a deep sleep on my face,* and my face toward the ground. And, behold, a hand touched me which set me upon my knees, and upon the palms of my hands." * * * "Then there came again and touched me, one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me."

Here, you will perceive, there is no question of their being angels or spirits seen clairvoyantly. Daniel writes of them *as men,* and, doubtless, so they seemed to him, being materialized spirits, which it is so hard to make the ignorant believe reappear, looking just like mortals.

And now come what seem to me to be two of the most remarkable proofs contained in the Bible, that spiritual intercourse, when true (and, naturally, this and every age resents falsehood and deception in every shape), is not *only permitted,* but *blessed of* God, from whom alone it can proceed. In the thirteenth chapter of Zechariah, when the Lord of Hosts is predicting a purgation for Jerusalem, he says :

"I will cause the prophets and *the unclean spirit* to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him : thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord ; and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day that the prophets shall be ashamed, every one, of his vision when he hath prophesied."

I have quoted this text on purpose to show how unfairly people argue a subject when they are determined to oppose it. A parson, to whom I quoted the above, seized on it at once, as a proof that God disapproved of *all intercourse* with the spiritual world, and had set His veto on it, by saying He should cause it to pass out of the land. But I have a trump card up my sleeve all the time for him. In the second chapter of Joel, where God is speaking of all the blessings He designs to heap upon repentant Zion, after having promised her wheat, and wine, and oil, and that her people should eat in plenty, He adds : "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters *shall prophesy*—your old men shall *dream dreams*—your young men shall *see visions ;* and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit, and I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth."

Of course I know that many of my readers will not accept the words of the Bible as evidence—that they consider it a very jumbled history of the times, written long after the events spoken of took place, and in the fantastical and allegorical language of the East, so that it is difficult to know what the writers of it did, or did not, mean. The interpretation of it has been made for us, not by God, nor even a Daniel, but by men, who felt compelled to explain it

in some way or other, and so made it fit in, with their own doctrines.

The mere fact that the New Testament, which we were taught from childhood to believe, was founded on the teachings of a Saviour, who was sent into the world for the salvation of the Christians, is only a reprint of the book of Buddha, who was in existence 560 years before Christ was born, is in itself sufficient to make us all regard the biblical statements as shaky. I know that I, for one, felt terribly aggrieved when I read Arthur Lillie's "Buddha and Early Buddhism," and as if I had been most unjustly taken in. What does the Church say to such statements as are contained in this book? Does she deny them; can she prove they are untrue? and, if not, how can she dare to go on preaching the same fables, and leading the people, who know less than herself, wrong?

Still, true or untrue, if the Bible does not contain any injunctions against Spiritualism, what does? If the only records we possess, which profess to tell us of God's laws, show Him as permitting His people to practice it, who is to say us nay?

The Church! Yes, certainly, and for her own purposes! Did she not do so from the beginning? Moses and Aaron, who were among the first priests we read of, had practiced all sorts of mediumship before they were called to take charge of the Israelites; but, as soon as they had to make laws for them, they forbade any man or woman to have dealings with familiar spirits. It was only then as it is now. Moses was raised in Egypt, and the Egyptians have been famed, from time immemorial, for being past-masters in the arts of magic and necromancy. He was a magician also, as he proved when he stood before Pharaoh; but, when he became a priest, he forbade his followers from imitating him. He wanted to keep all that sort of thing

to Aaron and himself, that they might appear more wonderful in the eyes of the congregation. Moses, with his "familiar spirits," and the Church, with its "diabolism." Can any one point out where the difference lies? Both wished to keep the power within the circle of their own authority. *There* it is the revelation of God; *outside* it becomes dealings with the devil! Isn't the matter very plain? Taught of spirits, we are taught of God, as Daniel and Joel and Ezekiel were taught. You will mark, in perusing the Bible, that, at first, there were no priests. The people were taught of their Heavenly Father through His angels. But, as a church was founded, and a temple was built, and priests were ordained, so will you read less and less of spiritual communication. It is the same now. The purer and simpler the life, the greater the faith in God and the ministry of His guardian angels. I know a parson in the north of England, in charge of a mining district, who says he can make no impression on his parishioners, because they are all spiritualists. These rough miners, who spend their lives in temporal darkness, are too spiritually enlightened to care to listen to his old-world theories. Most of my readers, I conclude, accept the story of the Christ as a reliable account of what took place. The Christian world is taught to believe it to be the inspired word of God, written especially for their edification. How that theory accords with the history of Buddha, to which I have already made reference, and which was vouched for, 460 years before, I leave it for my readers to determine; but one thing is certain—neither the miracles of Christ nor the miracles of Buddha have received any satisfactory explanation, until Spiritualism made them plain. Whoever has seen his or her friend appear after death in a materialized form can understand the resurrection of Christ. No one else can. And, because they cannot understand it,

they call it miraculous. Christ was the greatest medium this world has ever known. Well was he called Joshua the Healer! I say it in all reverence, and with no wish to depreciate his extraordinary powers: Why should we be so anxious to ascribe everything he did to a supernatural agency? Had he introduced the telephone, or phonograph, or the electric light, it would have appeared quite as great a miracle in those days as anything he did. Added to which, he constantly denied that he possessed greater power than any of his followers might have if gifted with the same faith—a fact which theologians appear to me to have systematically overlooked, or wilfully been silent upon. The story of Christ's miraculous birth I purposely pass over. The same, or a very similar account, was written of the birth of Buddha. If it were true of one, it may have been true of the other; but it has always seemed strange to me that the God Who denounced adultery and fornication in His children should have ordained, or countenanced, such a birth. I would rather try to prove to you that Christ was a medium; and, if he was God, his miracles were no greater than those which have been performed since his time, as, indeed, he promised should be.

He was a healing medium. "Healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people; and his fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought unto him all sick people, that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them."

"And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. *And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him,* saying: I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

"And, when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. *And he touched her hand,* and the fever left her."

"And, when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying: Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when Jesus said unto them: *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* they said unto him: Yea, Lord. *Then touched he their eyes,* saying: According to your faith be it unto you."

I want to call your attention that, in every case of healing, Christ had to *touch* the sick person; also, that he could not practice his healing mediumship without losing some of his vitality, or natural power. What did he say when the woman with the issue of blood came behind him in the crowd, and touched the hem of his garment? "Some one hath touched me, for I perceive *that virtue hath gone out of me.*" When he called together his twelve disciples, or pupils, he bestowed upon them the same power he possessed himself. How could they have inherited what belonged to God alone, unless it had been a natural power, open to the capability of men? "Heal the sick," said Christ; "cleanse the lepers; raise the dead; cast out devils." No one has ever ventured to ascribe miraculous powers to the disciples. They were only a set of unlearned fishermen. Jesus had selected them, doubtless, for their mediumistic powers (which we all possess, in a smaller or larger degree); but they could not have performed miracles, unless controlled by spiritual agencies. And he foresaw what their mediumship should bring upon them, when he added: "If they had called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Has not that prophecy been fulfilled in the present day? Do not all the opponents of Spiritualism declare that it is effected by the agency of the devil, and

would wrest this text into half a dozen different meanings rather than allow that it plainly refers to the mediumship of to-day? And when the Pharisees said that Christ cast out devils by Beelzebub, he answered them: "If I, by Beelzebub, cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? But if I cast out devils, by the Spirit of God, *then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*"

Christ was a physical medium! He changed the water into wine. He made seven loaves and two fishes feed a multitude. He walked upon the water. He caused money to be found in the mouth of a fish. But these powers were not always with him. They depended upon times and conditions, just as they do now. Else, what is the meaning of the text: "He did not many works there, *because of their unbelief*" (*i. e.*, of their scepticism)? And when the disciples asked him why they could not cast out a certain devil, he replied: "Because of your unbelief"; which proves that the spiritual powers will not help those who have no faith in them.

Christ was a materializing medium. He raised the dead. A white dove was materialized above his head. The direct voice was heard through him. He called down Moses and Elias, materialized, to talk with him. And, on that occasion, I want you to observe that the cloud overshadowed him before the direct voice was heard. Yet, these miracles were subject to external influences. He could not raise the daughter of Jairus until he had "put them all out of the room" (*i. e.*, eliminated all opposing influences). Of certain devils, he said: "This kind goeth not out, except by prayer and fasting," proving that he was compelled to submit to natural laws, just the same as mediums are to-day. When the Pharisees said he cast out devils by the prince of devils, what was his reply? "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself." And, in like manner, if the

devil comes to us to-day, in the guise of our departed friends, to incite us to lead worthier and holier lives, he is defeating the very purpose for which he is supposed to exist. Did Christ consider the exercise of mediumship to be wrong? He said: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward." And, again: "There is no man that can do a miracle in my name that can speak lightly of me," and he said this when the disciples had been rebuking some one for casting out devils. "The works that I do, shall he do also, *and greater works than these shall he do.*" Now, what greater works than Christ's have been done since his day? The disciples' miracles never came up to his. Yet, he said, positively, that they *should be done.* All the men who have lived, and died since then; those who have paid for their faith with their blood, and those who have been fiendish enough to spill the blood of their fellow creatures, in the attempt to force them to adopt their own opinions, martyrs and executioners alike, *have never performed one miracle;* yet Christ declared, emphatically, *they were to be.* And so they will, when we have eliminated our carnality and cultivated our spirituality more; when our teachers go before us, like shepherds before their sheep, and show us how it is to be done; when they cease to think so much about the loaves and fishes for themselves; about the temporal power and the temporal advantage; and help us to open the door for the spirits to come in and help us, instead of slamming it in their faces, as they do now—then miracles will once more be performed on this earth, and God will walk with Man, as he did of old. Can you recall the detailed account of the resurrection of Christ? Remember, that it took place *by night.* It was the crowning miracle, that was to pulverize the unbelieving world, and yet it took place *in darkness,* giving the Jews occasion to say that the

disciples had come by night, and stolen the body away. The resurrection would certainly have been more convincing if it had taken place in the daytime, and before the eyes of all men! Why did it not? Simply because *it was impossible!* Darkness was necessary for the creation of the world. Darkness was necessary for God to come down to speak to Moses in. And darkness was necessary for Christ to resurrect his body in. But, if we urge the necessity of darkness for a materializing seance, we are told that it must incontestably be a cover for fraud and chicanery. Mary Magdalene, who had come to the sepulchre *whilst it was yet dark,* expressly to see Christ, turned, and saw him standing beside her, and *knew not that it was Jesus.* "Jesus saith unto her, Why weepest thou, whom seekest thou? She, *supposing him to be the gardener,* saith unto him: Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself, and said unto him, Rabboni! which is to say, Master! Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say to them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God."

Now, I ask you to lay aside all your early prejudices, and consider for one moment *why should Mary Magdalene have mistaken Christ for the gardener?* Christ was a high class Jew, and, if contemporaneous history speaks truly, a fair man. Publius Neutulus, in writing of him, says: "His hair is of the color of a filbert; full, ripe and plain, down to his ears, but from his ears downwards, somewhat curled, and more orient of color waving about his shoulders; his forehead very smooth and plain * * * his face, nose and mouth so framed, as nothing can be reprehended; his beard somewhat thick, agreeable to the hair of his head for color * * * his eyes gray, clear and quick." The

gardener was, in all probability, a common, dark-skinned eastern coolie, one of the lowest types of natives. The hewers of wood and drawers of water are selected, to this day, from the lowest castes, and for a very good reason; namely, that no others will undertake the work. The Jews, too, wore long garments, white or colored, reaching to their feet; the gardener, probably, only a rag girt about his loins; possibly not even that. How, then, could the two men have resembled each other, even for a few moments, unless the gardener was the medium, who served for Christ's reappearance? The partial resemblance, which most materialized spirits bear to their medium, especially on their first appearance, has been a subject of much argument, and more incredulity, amongst enquirers into Spiritualism. The reason that has been given me for it, I shall touch on in another chapter. But here is a direct statement, that the fact is not reserved for our own times alone. When Jesus spoke to Mary, she recognized his voice, and was probably rushing forward, in her delight, to catch him by the garment. What were his first words? "*Touch me not!*"

And yet the sceptics complain if they are not allowed to grasp and clasp a materialized spirit in their arms!

After the death of Christ on the cross, what occurred? "The spirits of many that slept arose, and came out of their graves, and went into the city, and were seen of many;" and Christ, himself, twice passed through closed doors to visit his disciples, and appeared on the seashore and to the disciples at Emmaus. People have said to me that it is "too ridiculous" to think of spirits eating and drinking, as, "of course," we shall never do anything of the sort after we have quitted this earth. Another from the many proofs I could bring forward that the majority read their Bible without understanding it, that it is to

them but as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Did not Jesus tell his disciples, at the last supper, that he should not drink wine again, *until* he drank it new with them in his Father's kingdom? When he appeared to them on the seashore, did he not ask for food, and eat broiled fish and honeycomb with them? And, when he sat down to table with the disciples at Emmaus, did he not break bread before he vanished from their sight? A very old friend of mine, one who calls herself, and is, a Bible Christian, was discussing some of the statements in "There is no Death" with me, and animadverted rather freely on the familiarity with which I have written of the next spheres. "My dear!" she ejaculated, "of course it is all very interesting and wonderful, but there are parts of it I *cannot* understand. You write as if we are to go on almost the same in the next world as we do here. You speak of eating and drinking, and houses, and it is so impossible to believe that we shall continue to live in houses and sit down and all that sort of thing, you know."

My answer was conveyed by another question.

"Have you ever read the Bible?"

My friend was horrified at the question. She lifted her hands to heaven, as she replied: "My dear, you know that the Bible is my constant companion, my daily guide."

"And is not heaven described there as a city 'paved with gold' and having 'gates of pearl?'"

"Certainly!"

"When men build a city on earth," I said, "do they not make the excavations first, then erect the houses, then make the roads, and, lastly, lay the pavements; and what for?—to protect the foot-passengers from the traffic. What would be the use of gold pavements unless there were buildings and roads? What the good of gates of pearl unless they enclosed walls? Do you suppose that

they will open to let you into a jungle paved with gold?"

She pondered a moment, and then said: "Well, it is very strange, but I never thought of it in that light before. I have understood that it was all figurative, typical of the glories awaiting us; but your view of it really seems very reasonable."

And this is how the majority of Christians regard the Bible—as a species of fairy tale, which they can interpret just as they like, and I don't say that it is not a fairy tale; but, if we accept it at all, we must take it as it is written.

Christ materialized on two occasions when the disciples were assembled together in an upper room, when it is particularly mentioned that "the doors were shut," and on these occasions he touched them and spoke to them. After which his followers began to prophesy and to preach with divers tongues, and to send the handkerchiefs from off their bodies to the sick, and they were healed. What was that but healing mediumship, practiced in the same manner to this day? Do you remember the "mighty, rushing wind," *that filled all the house*, on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were inspired? That "wind" is the unmistakable sign of a successful seance to this day, whether the Holy Spirit visits the sitters, or not.

You must see, from the quotations I have given you, that, if Spiritualism is diabolism, the practices of the servants of God, both in the Old and New Testaments, must have been diabolism also. For the laws of Nature do not change, though centuries intervene, and if it be wrong for you and me to hold communion with the friends who have gone before us, it must have been equally wrong for them; and, since we cannot question the right of what our God does, or sanctions, we may conclude that he allows us the same

privileges that he bestowed as an especial blessing upon them.

One quotation more, and I have done. Saint Paul says: "There are diversities of gifts. To some, the gifts of healing; to some, the working of miracles; to some, prophecy; to some, *discerning of spirits*; to some, divers tongues; to some, the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh the self-same spirit. Wherefore, brethren, *covet to prophesy.*"

Covet, that is, to do exactly what hundreds of clairvoyants are doing all over the world at the present moment —to foretell the future, so that we may be prepared to meet it.

There is no other interpretation of these texts for unbiased people. Theologians may dispute the fact, but theologians are famous for wresting Scripture to their own advantage. I never met with one who could argue straight and fair, nor two who could argue alike. But, as I have said before, if you accept the Bible at all, you must take it as it is written. If we do not, who is to decide, at this distance of time, and from the lame translation that is offered us, what is its true meaning, or what is not? Any way, I hope I have made it plain, at all events, that Spiritualism, whatever the Church may say, was not forbidden, or discouraged, of God. And I hope, too, that what I have written may cause some of my readers to open their Bibles again, and read them by a light that may throw a new meaning upon their revelations.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT AUTHORS AND POETS THINK OF SPIRITUALISM.

And now, having seen what the writers of the Scriptures thought of Spiritualism, and read what they wrote about it, let us turn to the authors and poets of a later date, and analyze their inward convictions on the same subject. If you search the records of this, and every era, you will not fail to find traces of their writers' belief (though, perhaps, unacknowledged even to themselves), in the power of the spirits of the dead to revisit this earth. You all know what Longfellow, the greatest poet, and one of the greatest men, that America has ever produced, says on the subject:

> "*There is no death*, what seems so is transition;
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
> Whose portals we call death."

And the Reverend John Keble wrote:

> "For, in truth,
> Man's spirit *knows not death*, but sets aside
> The interlinear boundaries of the flesh,
> And in its thoughts, which are its proper self,
> Holds intercourse with those *which are unseen*,
> *As if they were still with us.*"

And thus wrote Adam Clarke (who, by the way, was the great-grandfather of Bessie Russell Davies, the clairvoyante), in his Commentaries:

"I believe that there is a supernatural and spiritual world, in which human spirits, both good and bad, live in a state of consciousness, and I believe that *any of these spirits* may (according to the order of God, in the laws of their place of residence) *have intercourse with this world, and become visible to men.*"

I quoted this passage whilst lecturing a few weeks back, and some would-be wiseacre took me up in print for saying that Adam Clarke had been a spiritualist; whereas, I said nothing of the sort. But, if the above sentence does not include the whole faith of Spiritualism, I don't know what does. The only difference being, that a spiritualist would have exchanged the words "I believe" for "I know."

The late Dr. Cumming, who was one of the most hard-headed and least sentimental men of his time, wrote:

"*This is certain:* Angels descend, and minister to the comfort of the suffering; those angels return from their ministry to the choirs of the happy, and can we suppose they will be silent on what they have seen, and to whom they have ministered below?"

And again: "Shall we admit that fallen angels may reach the heart, irrespective of the volition of its possessor, and that good angels cannot do the same?" And he adds: "I cannot believe that an evil spirit would speak the truth, or attest the inspiration of the Bible; for if a kingdom be divided against itself, how can it stand?"

Here is a quotation from the writings of the Reverend David Thomas:

"The departed are *thinking, feeling, acting still.* Their bodies are in the dust, but their *bodies* are there—not them; their instruments, not themselves. The breaking up of the harp destroys neither the life, nor the music of the lyrist. The science and love of sweet sounds may still inspire his breast; he may grasp some other instrument, and send

forth strains more rich, more deep, more entrancing, than ever."

And this is the opinion of William Ellery Channing:

"Although we are accustomed to think of Heaven as distant, of this we have no proof. Heaven is the union, the society, of the spiritual higher beings. *May not these fill the universe?* A new sense, a new eye might show *the spiritual world compassing us on every side.*"

These are but a few gems, gathered hastily, here and there, from the writings of some of our divines; to quote the innumerable passages met with in the course of one's reading, which prove the universality of this belief, would be to fill a volume much larger than the one I am compiling now. But, to search through the poets, would incline one to believe that it is impossible to be a poet, without being a spiritualist, at heart, if not by open confession. I commence with an extract from Adelaide Anne Proctor's "Story of the Faithful Soul":

"If I could only see him—if I could only go
And speak one word of comfort and solace—then I know
He would endure with patience and strive against his woe."

* * * * * *

"You *may* seek him who mourns you and look upon his face
And speak to him of comfort for one short minute's space."

From Longfellow's "Footsteps of Angels":

"Then the forms of the departed enter at the open door;
The beloved, the true-hearted, come to visit me once more."

From Coleridge's "Christabel":

"What if her guardian spirit 'twere? What if she knew
her mother near?
But this *she knows*, in joys or woes, that saints will
aid, if men will call;
For the blue sky bends over all."

From Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel":

"That he had seen right, certainly,
A shape with amice wrapped around,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea;
And knew—but how, it mattered not—
It was the wizard, Michael Scott."

From Tom Hood's "Haunted House":

"For, over all, there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper to the ear,
The place is haunted."

From Byron's "Manfred":

"Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek;
But, now, I see it is no living hue, but a strange hectic
—like the unnatural red which autumn plants upon
the perished leaf.
It is the same! O God! that I should dread to look
upon the same.
Astarte! No! I cannot speak to her"

From Moore's "Paradise and the Peri":

"She wept—the air grew pure and clear around her as
the bright drops ran
For there's a magic in each tear *such kindly spirits weep
for men.*"

From Mrs. Barrett Browning's "Bertha in the Lane":

"Mother! mother! thou art kind, thou art standing in
the room,
In a molten glory shrined, that rays off into the gloom!
But, thy smile is bright and bleak, like cold waves—
I cannot speak;
I sob in it and grow weak."

From Sir Edwin Arnold's "A Surprise":

"The greatest wonder is this—I hear,
I see thee, I touch thee, I love thee, dear!
And I am thy angel, who was thy bride,
And know that, though dead, *I have never died!*"

From Tennyson's "May Queen":

"But you were sleeping, and I said: 'It's not for them;
it's mine.'
And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for
a sign.
And once again it came, and close beside the window
bars,
Then seemed to go right up to heaven, and die among
the stars.
So, now, I think, my time is near."

From Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality":

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had, elsewhere, its setting, and cometh from afar."

From Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and "Macbeth":

"How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale;
Is not this *something more than fantasy?* What think you on't?"

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"What quite unmanned in folly?
If I stand here, *I saw him!*"

From Milton's "Paradise Lost":

"Millions of *spiritual beings walk the earth,*
Both when we wake and when we sleep."

From Lord Lytton's "There is no Death":

"And *ever near us,* though unseen, *the dear, immortal spirits tread,*
For all the boundless universe is life—*there are no dead!*"

From Hedderwick's "I cannot dread the death made beautiful by thee":

"O! say, *wilt thou come down to me,* or I to thee arise?"

From Charlotte Elizabeth's "The Mystery of Death":

"Perhaps, she hears me speak. Perchance, she felt your tears, as fast they fell.
And, maybe, when you bent to kiss her cheek, she knew it. Who can tell?"

From Dinah Muloch's "Thou seemeth strangely near":

"What spirit is it that doth pervade the silence of this empty room?
And, as I lift mine eyes, what shade glides off and vanishes in gloom?
The living are so far away, but *thou*—thou seemest strangely near,
Knowest all my silent heart would say, its peace, its pain, its hope, its fear."

Necessarily, these quotations are but a few out of thousands, and I have given them place, more in the hope of inducing my readers to search for proofs of this universal belief for themselves, than to convince them of what I say, by a few isolated specimens. But, having seen what the dead men and women have written about Spiritualism, let us come to the authorities of our own day—the names of workers still amongst us, the "up-to-date" opinions of people worthy of credence and attention. In the month of January, 1893, a correspondence took place in a newspaper called "The Morning," on the subject of Spiritualism, which was induced by a letter from the Reverend Joseph Parker, of the City Temple, to Mr. W. Stead, editor of "The Review of Reviews." This was followed by several more letters, from each of which I shall only quote such passages as go to prove my own argument. Dr. Parker's communication was headed "An Open Letter," and began thus:

"MY DEAR MR. STEAD—I thank you very warmly for calling my attention to your notes upon Spiritual Communication, which you have published in the Christmas number of your 'Review.' I am glad to be able to accept your statement without the faintest shadow of reserve as to its literal accuracy, because you have given me evidence, which *makes scepticism impossible.* * * * For myself, I have no difficulty in believing that all seances, all inquiries of the kind you indicate, all earnest endeavors to test the reality of the spiritual, represent *so much groping after God Himself.* 'God is a spirit.' If men were to give themselves, might and main, to an inquiry concerning God, I should regard that inquiry as expressing the deepest interest in true Spiritualism * * * It seems to me that a congregation, properly regulated, ought to constitute the *largest and most effective seance possible.* * * * Of course, if congregations will not lift up their thoughts to this high level, they cannot expect to receive visions from God. If they have merely assembled promiscuously, to take only the interest of curiosity in what is going on, they will deprive themselves of all the richest advantages. * * *

I cannot make light of the suggestion that inspiration is a present-day fact. *I believe that men may now receive direct messages from God.* From my point of view, inspiration neither began with the sacred Canon, nor closed with it. It is the very life of God in the universe. It is the voice of God to the human soul. * * * We do not want a new Bible. *We want a new reading of the old Bible.* * * * I have met with several Spiritualists, and have been struck by their personal earnestness. One or two of the godliest men I have ever known were simply infatuated by Spiritualism. Other men have been sober-minded, earnest, simple, and straightforward in all their supposed realizations of the higher forces. * * * Inspiration will come to different men in different ways. Holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They did not know what they were going to say. The prophets, probably, *did not understand one tithe of what they uttered.* They were, literally, and in every deed, *the medium* through whom God spoke His word to the world. When the disciples were warned that they should be brought before judgment seats, Christ told them not to give any thought to the matter of their own defense, because he promised them that, in the same hour, *it should be given them what they should say.* * * * I thank you for all you have done in this matter of Spiritualism ; but I venture to submit to you that all you have done is but alphabetic and elementary, and that *it ought to be no surprise* to you, or to any one else, *that communication between the worlds is possible.* The Bible has been teaching this during all the centuries of its existence. It is not a truth *outside* the Church, but *inside* the Church, and upon the *very center of the altar of the Church.* The Church ought not to look upon Spiritualism, when the processes are honestly conducted, with *any but a friendly eye,* because the Church well knows that every step in that direction *means advancement towards the sublime fact* that 'God is a spirit,' and that he is willing to communicate, every day, with the spirits of those who wait upon Him in faith and love."

* * * * * * * *

Now, so far, it will be seen that the sentiments of Dr. Parker and myself are synonymous. He has got at the true meaning and root of Spiritualism ; and, if he does not care to pursue it for the purpose of seeing his departed

friends, it is, perhaps, because he has reached a higher phase of the matter, or, more likely, that he has never lost any one whom he particularly wants to see again. For I have made notes on this subject, and invariably found that, where indifference to the practice of Spiritualism exists, the person is either cold-blooded or has no one on the other side for whom he particularly cares. In Mr. W. T. Stead's reply to Dr. Parker, he says :

"I am a Spiritualist only in the sense in which *every person who accepts the Bible is a Spiritualist.* I am simply an investigator. I am perfectly open to conviction, but I am also ready to recognize facts ; and, I hope, I am, at least, free from that *superstition of unbelief,* which is, really, *much more dense and crass* than the old kind of superstition, against which it makes war. * * * Spiritualism is inexplicable, except upon one hypothesis, which is, that the doctrine which finds its expression in almost every page of the Bible, is a true doctrine, and not a false one, viz. : that our bodies are not any essential part of ourselves, but that *the spirit is the real man,* which is clothed with flesh for a certain period, during which it lives and moves upon the surface of the earth ; but *it no more ceases to exist* when the body is laid upon one side, than you cease to live, when you put off your overcoat. * * * For the present, my last word is this—that, before many months are over, I think, it will be admitted by every candid mind, that the persistence of the individual after death, and the possibility of communicating with that individual has been as well established on a scientific basis, as any other fact in nature. That, you may think, is a bold assertion. It is not an assertion ; it is a prophecy, based upon facts within my own knowledge, and of which I speak with as much confidence as I do of anything which has come within my own personal observation."

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The Reverend Mr. Hawies then advocates enquiry. He says :

"The time has come when we may promptly abolish the word 'supernatural,' and distinguish merely between the 'known' and the 'unknown,' in Nature. Face to face with certain alleged phenomena

of an unintelligible character, repeated experience has, at last, placed one conclusion beyond dispute, viz.: That it is unsafe to denounce what it may be difficult to examine, but still more risky *not to examine what we propose to denounce.* The importance of ghosts, if they exist, and if they are what they profess to be, *is quite incalculable.* I think it possible that, by ascertaining the conditions under which communications may be had, and intelligently testing the means, an increase of human faculty may be acquired, and a new source of knowledge and power—perhaps a new world of spiritual attainment —opened up, which may raise our descendants, in the near future, *as much above us, in the scale of life,* as we are above the cave men of the past, or the bush men of the present. * * * Can a ghost be photographed? The camera has no fancies—the sensitive plate is without imagination. There is some reason to think that abnormal photographs are not uncommon. Many photographers are in the habit of casting aside plates after partial development, because they have, what they call, a fault; that is, a blur or marks, obscuring or occupying portions of the plate. Photographers will, in future, perhaps, be more wary. I heard the other day of a young lady, who was photographed at Brighton, I believe, and twice the plate came out blurred. The second time, she persuaded the photographer, who was about to lay it aside, as useless, to develop it. The blurs, on being examined with a magnifier, proved to be faces—all the same face. She at once recognized it as the face of a rejected lover, who had died. Again, some young men were photographing a river scene in the open air. The plate, when developed, showed a human body floating on the surface, which had certainly escaped the photographer's attention, if it was visible, but the young men were persuaded that nothing of the sort was there. My friend, General Taylor, supplied me with an interesting photograph taken of a brother officer of his, who visited, incog., a photographer, when the form of his brother, eight years dead, came out on the plate. He had but one plate of his brother, locked away in his trunk at home. I have had the opportunity of comparing the photo from the life with that of the dead, and the likeness is clearly recognizable, though the expression of the ghost's face is painful. * * * I want to plead, without dogmatism, or bigotry, for sustained and careful enquiry, until we have secured the facts, upon which we can, alone, be entitled to reason. I should like to ask, seriously, whether, even now, we have, or have not, secured those facts. *The time for this question has*

plainly come. The whole press is in a fever about it. *Society is riddled through and through with Occultism.* Orthodox science itself is beginning *to tremble and vacillate* in the old arm-chair of its old-fashioned dogmatism, and seems forced to admit, reluctantly, that these hundreds of men, distinguished in philosophy, chemistry, psychology, medicine, literature and art—even comprising those who have given in their adhesion to quantities of abnormal phenomena—*cannot all be fools and liars.* But worse for unbelievers remains behind. It seems now that, without resorting to some hypothesis of unexplained forces, directed by unknown laws, and producing incalculable phenomena, scientific discovery itself is likely to be hampered; all which things are, to me, hopeful signs of the times, and, I should think, must greatly embolden those who believe, *as I do,* in the infinite, and, as yet, unexplored resources of nature and human nature, *to speak out that which they do know, and testify to the things which their eyes have seen.* * * * Nothing contained in either the facts, or the speculations here put forward, is in conflict with the real teaching of Jesus Christ. And, let me further add, for the comfort of the weak-kneed and sincerely alarmed, that nothing which the Almighty has permitted to be true in the world of physical phenomena can possibly be unlawful to know, or be opposed to religion, or at variance with any other kind of truth, physical or spiritual, sacred or profane."

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These are the opinions and convictions of three of the cleverest men of the day. I suppose that, search as you may, you would hardly find three more powerful brains than those of Dr. Parker, Mr. Stead and Mr. Hawies. They ought to be sufficient to make the whole world desirous to prove that which they testify to to be the truth. But they were but the leaders to a chorus of similar testimonials.

A man, signing himself "Mejnour," writes:

"Of the real occurrence of the phenomena in question, I have not, for many years, been able to entertain a doubt, and believe that no sensible person, who will patiently and privately investigate, under

crucial tests, can do aught else, but admit their actual occurrence." * * *

This is followed by the testimony of Mr. W. H. Edwards, of 238 Southampton Street, S. E., who writes:

"As a rule, Spiritualists, before becoming convinced, are sceptical, but the facts are too many for them, and they simply act as intelligent men and women in accepting the theory in the absence of anything better. Spiritualism has, undoubtedly, existed in all ages and countries. The great difficulty really lies with *the clergy*, since the teaching of the spirits is vastly different from that of the Church. Mr. Maskelyne is under a great delusion if he thinks that Spiritualism is dying out. The difference is, people do not go about proclaiming their views; because to do so, is to run the risk of being socially ostracized. It is not really worth while to incur all the odium the admission of being a Spiritualist brings in its train. What with the devoutly religious on the one hand, and the hard-headed materialist on the other, the Spiritualist has a fine time of it, and is cordially detested by both." * * *

I do not agree with Mr. Edwards that, to confess one's self a Spiritualist, is to be "socially ostracized." Sometimes I have wished it would have done that kind office for me! But the anxiety to enquire and learn its wonders seems growing daily, until one's time is no longer one's own, and one is obliged to appear unwilling to help, because the continual demands interfere with one's daily work. But, as for the "devoutly religious," and the "hard-headed materialist," I have never let either the one, or the other, interfere with my belief, or open avowal of it. I consider I have as much right to hold my opinions as they have to hold theirs. When I first became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, I was younger than I am now; more enthusiastic, and with more faith in my fellow-creatures. So I used to try to convince them, also, of what had made my life happier, but I have given it up, long ago. I never try to make a convert now. It is too much trouble. My

sole aim is to bring a little comfort home to those who are sorrowing for the loss of some beloved friend, and, thank God, in that I have succeeded. As for the rest—the sceptics, the scandalized, and the fools—I leave them to find out the truth for themselves. They must do it before long. When my kind, old confessor, Father George Oldham, of St. Mary Magdelene's Church, at Brighton, came back and blessed me, just after the Catholic papers had been spitting all the venom their Christianity had taught them at me for publishing "There is no Death," I said to him: "*You* don't blame me, then, Father, as the rest do?" And his answer was: "My child! every spirit must needs be a Spiritualist!" About two years ago, I was sitting in a London drawing-room, imbibing the usual lukewarm tea amongst the usual lukewarm acquaintances. The conversation turned upon the subject of my book, when a creature present (I won't call him a gentleman), politely observed that Spiritualism was all "rot," and he did not believe a word of it. I looked at him. He was an officer—fat and puffy in the face like a tom-cat, and with about as much expression, and lolling in an arm-chair, as much as to say: "I give you all leave to admire me, and see what a fine fellow I am." My hostess remarked that, considering I was present, she did not consider the opinion he had expressed a very polite one, upon which, seeing he had gone a little too far, and wishing, I conclude, to soothe my lacerated feelings, he turned himself round towards me and said, in a voice as if his mouth was full of plums: "Well, convert me, then, convert me!" I regarded him for a moment before I answered: "My dear sir! do you imagine it can make the slightest difference to me what you believe, or do not believe—where you will go when you die, or where you will not go. You appear to think yourself and your future of a great deal of consequence; but, I assure you, it does not

interest me in the slightest degree." He looked rather confused, but asked: "Why do you preach it, then?" "For those who need comfort," I replied. "You are evidently so well-pleased with yourself, that you cannot possibly want any." I give this advice to Mr. Edwards, and all whom it may concern: Keep your Spiritualism for your own use and pleasure, and don't be too lavish of it to other people. They will probably only abuse you for your pains. But, if you appear perfectly indifferent on the subject, they will probably pester you for information. It is the way of the world.

Mr. Russell Davis wrote thus to "The Morning":

"As for the statement that Spiritualism is dying out, Mr. Maskelyne must admit that the Spiritualists themselves are, or ought to be, the best judges as to this, and I, for one, beg respectfully to contradict his assertion. I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Maskelyne is absolutely ignorant of the question. For eighteen years I have been living in London, and during the whole of that period have been using my clairvoyant gifts as a medium (privately), and, at this moment, can positively declare that the belief in Spiritualism has not merely steadily increased, but is making enormous strides, and it is this fact, which has now placed the matter before the public, who are at last bound to admit that there 'must be something in it after all.' Twenty years ago, the proper thing to say, when Spiritualism was mentioned, was: 'Oh, ah, Spiritualists, indeed! They are either rogues or fools—the cheaters and the cheated.' Now it is: 'Oh dear, dear! there is no doubt these things you mention take place, but it is all the work of the devil, and will ruin you, body and soul; so pray have nothing more to do with it.' After twenty-five years' experience, I am happy to say, I am ruined in neither body nor soul. * * * I can prove, beyond doubt, that Spiritualism is not only rapidly on the increase, but that it has penetrated into high places, and into the very heart of our greatest seats of learning. The truth has forced itself into the minds and lives of some of our greatest men and women, and this, in spite of continuous opposition from all sides, and in the face of the clergy of all denominations, who, long ago, perceived that, when once the people began to think for

themselves, and went to the true source of spiritual light to learn for themselves, the power of the Church would be gone forever. New Spiritualism, indeed! old Spiritualism and new Theology, that's the real thing! For Spiritualism has existed from the beginning, and the truth will out. Let us now have fair play, and I prophesy that, as soon as the public realize there is something in it, Spiritualism will, even more rapidly than at present, make way."

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Another correspondent, who signs himself A. V. B., writes thus:

"My own experience is that, never since the phenomena of modern Spiritualism attracted the attention of the people, have there been so many intelligent and earnest enquirers as to its truth as there are at the present time. I quite agree with Dr. Parker that the aims of Spiritualism should be of the highest possible character; but I am not at one with him when he decries the phenomenal aspect of the subject, nor am I at one with him when he asserts 'that all endeavors that are made to realize the spiritual world are endeavors which cannot end, in themselves, with any real advantage to anybody.' It appears to me that, if the phenomena which occur in the seance room can be proved to originate from the spirit side of life, then these phenomena are, or should be, of the most vital importance to the religions of the country; and, if of importance to the religions of the country, they should surely be worthy of the utmost interest and attention of the exponents of those religions. I am perfectly ready to admit that Spiritualism is not a religion, but a science; but, if the religious teachers of the people persistently ignore a subject, which so nearly affects their teachings, then they must not be surprised if the people investigate for themselves. * * * If it is a fact, as I assert it is, that we, who are, at present, in the material state, are, now, as far as we are spiritually concerned, in association with spirits, whose attributes are akin to our own, and whose love and aspirations are of a like character, then this should point to the fact that the character of the phenomena produced in the seance room will be guided by the character of the people forming the circle."

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The Reverend Dr. John Pulsford says:

"I have read what Mr. Stead has written in his 'Review of Reviews,' and I feel that what he has recorded of his personal experience is a most transparently simple and ingenuous statement. It left no doubt on my own mind that what is described there *actually did occur, as represented;* and, indeed, I cannot conceive of any one inventing such a story. I said to Mrs. Parker, after I had read the statement, that, if the ultimatum of Christianity is to be absolute unity between Heaven and earth, there must be some law of that unity; and what is so likely to be a law of the unity *as communication between spirits departed and persons living in this world?* * * * Relatives of mine in America lately said, as to what transpired at seances at which they were present, that, although a low order of spirits did often descend upon them, and make communications of a less important description, yet, *for all the world, they would not have missed being present,* as some of the communications were, undoubtedly, from departed spirits with whom they had been acquainted. * * * The transfiguration of Christ was, really, *a Spiritualistic seance* of a very high order; and, if we denied the uses of Spiritualism in this age, we should be led too far, for we should be induced to treat with scorn all the instances in the Scriptures in which, we are told, communication did take place between spirits and persons in the flesh. At the same time, whoever commits himself (or commit themselves) to anything like a seance for purposes of spiritual investigation, should be in a very prayerful, watchful condition; and, if they don't go up, themselves, into an elevated, spiritual state, they only open the door to the low class of deceiving spirits. Spirits immediately on the borders of our earth, it must be remembered, cannot ascend. They are spirits who have departed in so earthly a condition that they are constantly seeking some access to the earth, and are delighted at an opportunity of being able to use the bodies of persons in this world."

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Several correspondents lessened the value of their testimony by not giving their full names. I never could understand this want of courage in press correspondence. If you are ashamed of doing a thing, I say, don't do it.

However, there may be professional reasons for certain people concealing their names, although I believe that honesty is always the best policy, whatever it may bring on us to bear in its cause. J. C. D. writes :

"Previous to the year 1884, I was a member of the Secular Union of Freethinkers, and still hold with them in my abhorrence of dogma and a love of humanity; but, after diligent and earnest investigation, aroused by a lecture, delivered by Dr. Nichols, on "Ghosts I have Seen," I was obliged, *by conviction, to renounce promulgating purely materialistic views.* * * * I am a simple mechanic, but rejoice to know that man's aspirations are not to be annihilated by death, and that unseen help is often at hand, when practicable, by contrivance, suggestion and foresight, direct and indirect, on the part of the dear ones gone before."

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The following is from Mr. J. T. Audy, Winchester Hall, Peckham:

"Mr. Maskelyne may say that he is convinced that all the so-called manifestations are fraudulent, and that he 'looks upon Spiritualism as dying.' I would ask him, if he classes the records of manifestations in the Bible in the same category ? Assertions and denunciations are easily made, but what of the mass of evidence at hand regarding phenomena, vouched for by men of integrity ? This wholesale sweeping away of truthful witnesses is contemptible, and used to put off investigators, and is an old advertising dodge ; but it does not destroy facts. I have been an eye-witness to many remarkable things. There are thousands willing to testify to the reality of spirit communion." * * *

Of course, *I* was not left out of this wordy war ; but I have kept the few remarks I had to make about it to the last, as I have said almost all I have to say already.

"I can quite understand that it would not pay him (Mr. Maskelyne) to be a Spiritualist: and that he would rather not believe in it. It would spoil half his business, which is conducted on the principle

of an exposure of Spiritualism. But, when he asserts that 'the thing is rapidly dying—let it die,' he states *what is utterly untrue.* Never has Spiritualism been so largely disseminated, and so firmly believed in and practiced as at the present moment, and that not among the illiterate and lower classes, but among the aristocracy of England. Let me assure him that it is *not dying,* that it is not even sick from the blows that he and Mr. Stuart Cumberland try to give it, but that there are more Spiritualists in London, to-day, than there ever were before, and their number is daily increasing. Dr. Parker writes very leniently of the whole business, as such a learned and deeply thinking man would do; but he has not dissected the matter as much as he might have done. He asks what good has Spiritualism ever done, and what good is it to receive a message from a dead uncle or aunt? It has done this good, Dr. Parker: It has done what the Church has failed, in many instances, to do. It has convinced men that *there is an after-life.* Can you say, honestly, that the teachings of the Church and the reading of the Bible have been able to prevent an enormous amount of atheism and infidelity in the present day? The world teems with it. Was there ever a time when men and women believed less and attended church less? You are quite right in saying we need a new reading of the Bible. Half the people who profess a belief in the authenticity of the Bible do not know, and have never cared to study, what its simplest texts mean. Does the Bible keep men in the right path—the majority of men, I mean? Has the Church the power to keep them from becoming renegades? Have her preachers the power to convince them that *there is a future life;* or, having convinced them, *to make them realize* it? There are no renegades in Spiritualism. A Spiritualist who has once been convinced that he has seen the dead, never lets go of his belief in another life. We are called fatuous and fanatical, simply because our belief is so firm. I know numbers of men who believe in Spiritualism who never believed in the Church, nor the Bible, till the spirits taught them to do so. It is true that a harmonious congregation should form one vast seance; but when do you find them harmonious? Do they not assemble, each one occupied with his, or her, own interests, and, as a rule, come away without an idea of what they have been listening to? A very different sort of assembly, from the breathless interest with which the sitters at a seance—not silly women and children only, remember; but men of science, and ability, and learning—await the coming of their departed friends. Spiritualism is a

revival, and a revival that is but in its infancy. It will not hurt the Church. It will drive its votaries within her walls. It has been permitted, in this age of scoffing and unbelief and scepticism, in order to *force* men to think and enquire for themselves *whether there is another life or not.* And, I believe, it will go on and grow and increase in power, until, as the learned doctor says, 'men receive direct messages from God.' I admire the courage of Mr. Stead, and, I believe, it will result, as every honest endeavor does, in great good to himself. It is of very little consequence what one or two individuals think of the matter; it has come for the mass. It is what the mass wants—direct revelation of the existence of those whom they thought they had lost. God is love, and man cannot live without love; and, to convince him that his love has not been wasted, but that those who evolved it are living and waiting for him on the other side, is to urge him on to find the best means by which he shall join them there. And so Spiritualism plays into the hands of the Church, by sending those she has convinced of the truth of another life to the Church—to find the God Who shall reunite them with those they have lost."

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It will be seen, from the foregoing remarks, that my opinion has not changed during all the time I have been a Spiritualist; rather, it has been strengthened with the passing years. As I wrote, I have never known any one who believed in Spiritualism go back from it; it is impossible to go back from the evidence of all one's senses. How wonderfully Spiritualism runs through music. Half the composers are inspired men; half the music they give to the world bears the impress upon it of their belief in this great truth. Have you heard Sir Arthur Sullivan's "The Distant Shore," "The Mother's Dream," and "O Fair Dove! O Fond Dove!"; Cire Pinsuti's "In Shadow Land" and "The Land of Love"; Franz Abt's "Spirits and Angels," and Virginia Gabriel's "When the Pale Moon Arose, Last Night"? These, amidst hundreds of other songs, published daily, will show you how the com-

posers love to touch the tender strings of Spiritualism when they sing. Even in the pages of "The Youth's Companion," I came across, the other day, such sweet and true verses by Zitella Cocke, that I cannot forbear quoting them here. They are called "A Ministering Spirit":

"When I was dead one year, I came unto mine own—it was so sweet
To see their faces, and to hear the voices that I could not greet:
Within the old, familiar home, they talked and laughed with youthful zest—
Brave brothers and fair sisters dear, nor little dreamed who was their guest.

They measured out the morrow's plans, and counted joys that filled to-day,
Their eager eyes sought present good—I was a being passed away;
The world was with them, and did lure, with throng of happy, living things;
They could not feel my spirit touch, nor hear the rustle of my wings.

And all went forth, save one, alone, who, to the window casement stole,
Where erst we two were wont to sit, and in the anguish of her soul
Wept long and sore, with trembling hands upon her tear-washed face, and cried:
'God pity me, this woeful day! this was the day my brother died.'

Then, with a spirit's subtle ken, God-given, did I minister
Sweet comfort; such as God gave me, unmeasured, gave I unto her.
Till, sad with pleasure's surfeit, they who went, returning, found no trace
Of woe in her, and whispered, low: '*She wears God's glory on her face.*'"

CHAPTER V.

MISS MARRYAT'S BOGUS BOGEY.

On the 14th of December, 1893, there appeared an article in "Truth," under the heading of "Scrutator," under the above title, which made every one, who knew anything about me, very indignant—not because it attempted to throw doubt upon my honesty with regard to the statements made in my book "There is no Death," and to prove that I must be a self-deluded fool—but, because it very seriously libeled me with reference to my domestic relations, with which it had no more concern than I have with the domestic relations of the editor of "Truth." My friends were most anxious that I should take up the matter publicly and make the article the subject of a newspaper quarrel—my solicitor declared it to be libelous—and, I think, some people were rather disappointed that I took it so quietly, and preferred to abide my time and refute its statements in print that should last longer than that of a weekly paper. This is what I now propose to do, though very unwillingly. It is a subject I would much rather have left to die a natural death. The boy to whom it refers is dead, and cannot speak (at least in the opinion of Mr. Davis and his ally "Scrutator") for himself—and of the dead, they say, let nothing but good be spoken; but, if silence is to be preserved at the expense of the character of the living, it becomes a crime against one's self, and the cause for which one fights. So I will quote another proverb instead, and say that "A living dog is better than a dead lion," and so, for the sake of Spiritualism and my honor, I

will state the truth of Francis Lean's life here. There are members of his family who should have answered this article, and denied many of its statements—members, who know well how much I did for the dead boy, and in what manner he requited the kindnesses shown to him by most people—but they have not had the pluck, nor the gratitude to do it, and so have only themselves to thank, if I plead for myself. In order to do, however, what I propose, it becomes necessary for me to reprint the whole article *in extenso*, lest I should be accused of leaving out parts, in order to suit my own purpose. I must premise that the italics are mine.

"About two years ago, under the title 'There is no Death,' Miss Florence Marryat presented to the public a highly edifying record of experiences of the spirit world. As it was dealt with by my reviewer at the time, it is unnecessary for me to make, now, any general remarks upon this book, though I may observe, in passing, that it strikes *me as one of the most painful records of combined imposture and self-deception* to be found in this class of literature."

Now, before I go any further, I should like to ask Scrutator, *why* my book strikes him as one of the most painful records to be found in Spiritualistic literature. Has he ever read any other books on the same subject? Has he read Alan Kardec, Colonel Olcott, Robert Dale Owen, or John Wesley? Have they not all narrated experiences of Spiritualism, which are quite as startling as mine? In my own book I have given several names of men of science and learning who investigated with me and saw the same things. Are they all fools and lunatics, including my father, Captain Marryat, the latchet of whose shoe (mentally speaking) Scrutator is not worthy to unloose? Or, is he cleverer than the whole lot put together?

Doubtless, he thinks so ; but he will have to make his title good before the world follows his example. I lay my claim for attention far more on the reputation of the pioneers who have gone before me, than on my own simple relation of facts which have come within my cognizance.

But, to return to Scrutator.

"It is sufficient, for the present purpose, to say that the book contains reports of Miss Marryat's *alleged* interviews with a large number of departed spirits, under the auspices of various professional mediums. Quite recently, however, I have come into possession of evidence which seems to make certain passages of the book worthy of further notice, not merely on account of the light which the evidence throws on Miss Marryat's remarkable personal experiences, but for the sake of its bearing upon Occult phenomena generally. The passages to which I refer, recount *supposed* apparitions to Miss Marryat of her step-son, Mr. Francis Lean, at the time of, and subsequently to, his being drowned off the coast of Peru. The evidence, with which I am now able to supplement Miss Marryat's narrative, comes up in the following way : A shipmate of Mr. Lean's, who was an intimate friend of the lad, and cognizant of the exact facts in regard to his death, accidentally came across Miss Marryat's book, a few months ago, and being struck—as well he might be—with *certain statements, and still more certain suggestions made by* the writer, and by the *supposed* ghost, drew up, on his next visit to England, a statement in regard to the circumstances, which he forwarded to me. The name of this gentleman is Frederick John Davis, a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve, and *he is prepared, if necessary, to verify his narrative by a declaration on oath.* To make the story intelligible, however, it is necessary to give Miss Marryat's statement first. The first allusion to Mr. Lean's death, is at

pp. 48–9 of the book. Miss Marryat there described how, in July, 1880, she went down to Brighton by herself to complete some literary work. She says: 'I used to write all day, and walk in the evening. It was light then till eight or nine o'clock, and the Esplanade used to be crowded till a late hour. I was pushing my way, on the evening of July the 9th, through the crowd, thinking of my work more than anything else, when I saw (as I fully thought) my stepson, Francis Lean, leaning with his back against the palings, at the edge of the cliff, and smiling at me.'"

Now will my readers please to observe, at this juncture, that I mention *no time whatever*, as the hour of my seeing the lad, as, indeed, I could not have done, as I had been out for some time and did not know the exact hour.

"'He was a handsome lad of eighteen, who was supposed to have sailed in his ship for the Brazils five months before. But, he had been a wild young fellow, causing his father much trouble and anxiety, and my first impression was one of great annoyance; thinking, naturally, that since I saw him there, he had never sailed at all, but run away from his ship at the last moment. I hastened up to him, therefore, but, as I reached his side, he turned round quite methodically and walked down a flight of steps that led to the beach. I followed him, and found myself among a group of ordinary seamen mending their nets, but I could see Francis nowhere. I did not know what to make of the occurrence, but it never struck me that it was not the lad himself, or some one remarkably like him. The same night, however, after I had retired to bed, *in a room that was unpleasantly brilliant, with the moonlight streaming in at the window,* I was roused from my sleep by some one turning the handle of my door, and there stood Francis, in his naval uniform, with the peaked cap in his hand, smiling at me

as he had done upon the cliff. I started up in bed, intending to speak to him, when he laid his finger on his lip and faded away. This second vision made me think something must have happened to the boy, but I determined not to say anything to my husband about it till it was verified. Shortly after my return to London, we were going, in company with my son (also a sailor), to see his ship, which was lying in the docks, when, as we were driving through Poplar, I again saw my stepson, Francis, standing on the pavement and smiling at me. That time I spoke. I said to Colonel Lean: "I am sure I saw Francis standing there. Do you think it is possible he may not have sailed after all?" But Colonel Lean laughed at the idea. * * * We visited the seaside after that, and, in September, whilst we were staying at Folkestone, Colonel Lean received a letter to say that his son Francis had been drowned by the upsetting of a boat in the surf of the Bay of Callao, in the Brazils (sic), *on the 9th of July* * * * the day I had seen him twice in Brighton, *two months before we heard that he was gone.*' The reader will note here, that either Miss Marryat *is a singularly inaccurate historian,* or her knowledge of geography is wofully deficient, it being, I should have thought, a matter of universal knowledge that Callao is not in 'the Brazils,' but on the coast of Peru, on the other side of the Continent, and distant from the Brazilian coast as far as the Bay of Biscay from the Persian Gulf. That, however, is a mere detail."

Scrutator thought he had got me nicely there—that I should be terribly ashamed either of confessing to inaccuracy (which is correct) or to deficient geography. But he is mistaken. I acknowledge that, in so carelessly writing of Callao in the Brazils, I showed as little knowledge of my subject as he does in writing of Spiritualism. Perhaps, if we were submitted to a catechism on the subjects, he might

be found the more ignorant of the two. But my want of knowledge of geography has nothing to do with the fact of my having seen, or not seen, the spirit of Francis Lean.

"The next mention of Mr. Lean is at pp. 133, in a description of the various marvels wrought by a medium named Colman, who 'materialized' this poor youth, and thus enabled him to communicate to Miss Marryat and, apparently, to Colonel Lean, also, 'the circumstances of his death and the events leading to it,' matters previously unknown to them."

Scrutator speaks of *my* inaccuracy. Let me point out his. There is no mention in "There is no Death" of Francis Lean being "materialized" through Mr. Colman. It is whilst writing of his trance-mediumship that I mention Francis' name. I say, in speaking of him: "He had a peculiar manner, also—quick and nervous—and a way of cutting his words short, which his spirit preserves to the smallest particular, and which furnish the strongest proofs possible of his identity to those who knew him here below." The relevance of this quotation will be perceived further on in my chapter.

"It is much to be regretted," resumes Scrutator, "that Miss Marryat omits to state what were the circumstances narrated in this instance; for, as I shall presently show, when the materialized phantom of Mr. Lean made statements on the same subject under the auspices of another medium, their accuracy leaves much to be desired. Passing over another highly instructive passage, in which the deceased lad is described by the spirit of his still-born sister, as 'chevying' her round a fountain, we next come across Francis Lean at pp. 241, under the mediumship of a worthy who is only alluded to as the 'doctor.' As this passage contains the supposed shade's account of the circumstances of his death, it is necessary to quote it in full: 'As

she left us, a dark figure advanced into the room and ejaculated "Ma! ma!" I recognized, at once, *the peculiar intonation and mode of address* of my stepson, Francis Lean, with whom, since he had announced his own death to me, I had had no communication *except through trance-mediumship.'"*

What about the materialization through Arthur Colman?

"'Is that you, my poor boy?' I said. 'Come closer to me! You are not afraid of me, are you?' (Why on earth should he be afraid of her? Is it usual for ghosts to be afraid of human beings? Ed. Truth.)"

Now, this question alone proves that the man who wrote this article has never done more than skim through my book, if he has done that, or he would have no need to put it. And, yet, he presumes to criticise it.

"'O, no, ma, of course not; only I was at the Opera House, you know, with the others, and that piece you recited—you know the one—it's all true, ma, and I don't want you to go back to England. Stay here, ma, stay here!' I knew perfectly well to what the lad alluded, but I would not enter upon it before a stranger. So I only said: 'You forget my children, Francis; what would they say if I never went home again?' This seemed to puzzle him; but, after a while, he answered: 'Then go to *them*, ma; go to *them*.' All this time he had been talking in the dark, and I only knew him by the sound of his voice. I said: 'Are you not going to show yourself to me, Francis? It is such a long time since we met.' 'Never, since you saw me at the docks. That was me, ma, and at Brighton, too, only you didn't half believe it till you knew I was gone.' 'Tell me the truth of the accident, Francis,' I asked him. 'Was there foul play?' 'No,' he replied; 'but we got quarreling about *her*, you know, and fighting,

and that's how the boat upset. It was my fault as much as anybody else's.'"

Now, before I go any further, I wish to observe that "Ma" was Francis Lean's usual way of addressing me, greatly to my annoyance. It sounded so vulgar and common. He was not overgifted with brains, poor lad! indeed, he was *singularly deficient* in them, and his "bleating" after me in the way he did, used to give me the horrors. I was not alone in this particular. It annoyed his father quite as much as it did me. Scrutator is very ready (as will be seen further on) to accept every word that Mr. Davis said upon the subject as gospel, simply because he took his side *against* Spiritualism. The testimony of a perfect stranger to himself and to the Lean family is taken before anything the members of the lad's family might say. Mr. Davis affirms he was an intimate friend of young Lean's for two years before his death. That may be; but he certainly was not a friend of the family's, nor had he ever been admitted within the doors of the house, as far as the mistress of it knows. Anyway, if Mr. Davis knew nothing of the "her" alluded to in the last paragraph, nor of the circumstances which took place just before Francis Lean shipped in the "Stuart," it proves there was something left for even his most intimate friend to learn.

"'How was it your body was never found?' 'It was dragged down in an undercurrent, ma. It was out at Cape Horn before *they offered a reward for it.*' Then he began to light up, and as soon as the figure was illuminated, I saw that the boy was dressed in 'jumper,' a 'Jersey' of dark woolen material, such as they wear in the merchant service in hot climates, but over it all, his head and shoulders included, was wound a quantity of the flowing white material I have before mentioned. 'I can't bear this stuff, it makes me look like a girl,' said Francis, and with his hands he

tore it off. Simultaneously, the illumination ceased, and he was gone. I called him by name several times, but no sound came out of the darkness. It seemed as though the veiling which he disliked preserved his materialization, and that, with its protection removed, he had dissolved again." The lad is subsequently materialized once more through the agency of a medium called Virginia Roberts; this time minus the flimsy white veiling, in consequence of which he did not, on that occasion, look like a girl; but he made no disclosures of importance."

Now, to criticise this criticism as it goes, it will be observed that Scrutator, whilst alluding to the reappearances of Francis Lean, as the "alleged" interview, the "supposed" apparition, and the "supposed" ghost, does not mention the fact that when he appeared with the "doctor," I was accompanied by Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker, the sister of Henry Ward Beecher, and when with Virginia Roberts, in a private sitting room in an hotel, by Mrs. Palmer Stern, spoken of as Mrs. S——, both of whom saw the "supposed" apparition as distinctly as myself. On these latter occasions, therefore, I can hardly be said to have been imposed upon, or self-deceived.

To proceed. "So much for Miss Marryat. Now for Mr. Davis. He begins by stating that he is a master mariner, and that, in July, 1880, he was first mate of the British bark 'Stuart,' on which Francis Lean was serving as an apprentice. The captain's name was Bradshaw, and the second officer was Mr. F. Kerr, who had been in the ship two years, and was an intimate friend of Mr. Lean. The war between Chili and Peru was, at this time, in progress, and on July 9th the 'Stuart' was lying off Chorillos, a small port south of Callao, waiting for a suspension of hostilities in order to discharge her cargo at Callao, which was at this time blockaded. The first part of

Mr. Davis' statement I desire, as far as possible, to pass over, because *it touches on matters of family history, of a delicate nature;* but I feel bound to mention that Mr. Davis says, on the strength of two years' acquaintance with Francis Lean on board the 'Stuart,' that the sentiments entertained by the young man towards his stepmother *were the reverse of kindly.* In fact, *from specific speeches, which he quotes,* it is clear that if, after his decease, Mr. Lean visited his stepmother in a smiling and aimable mood, and addressed her in the affectionate terms above quoted, he must, indeed, have 'suffered a sea change,' after the catastrophe of July 9th. *Mr. Davis flatly refuses to believe in the possibility of his addressing Miss Marryat either in the flesh or the spirit, as 'ma,' or 'mother,' or by any term of endearment.*"

Here lies the most difficult part of my own justification; for I cannot possibly clear my name from these insolent charges, made by a person *who had never met me,* without reflecting on the character of Francis Lean; but there is no other way out of it. I must prove that Mr. Davis has either wilfully lied about his intimate friend, or that that friend was unworthy of the name. This master mariner, who has never been introduced to me, nor admitted to my house, "flatly refuses to believe" what every member of Francis Lean's family could assure him was the truth. Francis Lean had very good reason to address me affectionately; for, had it not been for my intercession, he would never have been readmitted to his father's house. Before I was married with Colonel Lean, his son had robbed him to such an extent that he banished him from home, and only allowed him to re-enter it on condition he was at once sent to sea. There was such a terrible disturbance between father and son on that occasion that the boy ran away from home and was not traced for some time afterwards. When

I begged that he might be readmitted, I was informed that, in that case, his people would not be answerable for anything that might be stolen from the premises. His conduct, during the short time he remained with us, was a constant source of anxiety, as some fresh story of misconduct was brought to his father's notice almost daily. Under such difficulties, I was always Francis' great resource. Everybody, who knew him at that time, knew how he would hang round my neck and wheedle me out of money, or whatever he might require. Considering that I had married a major on half-pay, with eight children, it would not need much perspicuity, on the part of the public, to guess from whom the butter that spread the bread came. I cannot remember ever having given Francis Lean an unkind word ; but I *can* remember being often rebuked by his father for allowing him to get over me by soft sawder, that, if Mr. Davis' word is to be relied upon, was all lies. Since Mr. Davis was such a dear friend of his, he may, perhaps, remember that when Francis joined the "Stuart," he had, very recently, had the scarlet fever—so recently, indeed, that he had not yet "peeled," and it was necessary to procure the captain's consent before he could be allowed to join. Perhaps my grateful stepson did not inform him that *I*—the stepmother, towards whom his feelings were so much the reverse of kindly—whom he flatly refuses to believe could ever have addressed me in affectionate terms, was the one to nurse him and his brothers and sisters through that disease, when their own relations were too much afraid of infection to enter the sick room ; that I stayed with him day and night, and, when he was low and believed himself in danger of death, was the recipient of all his confidences and confessions. This was not a deed done in the dark. Every one knows it is true, from Dr. Howell, of Boundary Road, who attended the children,

to the servants who waited on them. The last letter Francis wrote to his father contained an affectionate message to me, with the rider, "tell her I shall never forget how she nursed me through the scarlet fever." What, then, of the gratitude and honesty of the young man, whose sentiments were "the reverse of kindly," when discussing me with his shipmates. Why, the very fact of his doing so proves he was a paltroon at heart. What gentleman, with the feelings of a gentleman, would talk over his female connections with a lot of rough "'prentices"? Who, who could do such a thing, could be trusted to tell the truth in other matters?

"For the rest his narrative proceeds thus: Captain Bradshaw went on shore early in the day, July 9th, and left instructions for me to send one of the ship's life boats on shore shortly after noon, and I did so, the boat being in charge of Mr. Kerr, the second officer, with five men with him to row her. Shortly after the boat had pushed off from the ship, I noticed her returning, and, upon getting near, Mr. Kerr hailed me to ask for another man to assist in the rowing, as the boat rowed heavily. Francis Lean was standing by my side at the time, and the look on his face convinced me that he would like to go, and I told him he might do so. He then asked permission to get his watch and chain from the berth. I granted his request, and, a few seconds afterwards, he appeared on deck, carrying his uniform coat on his arm, and a pipe and tobacco pouch in his hand. I noticed that he had his watch and chain attached to his vest. He entered the boat and took the bow oar, and that was the last I saw of him." * * * *

The intimate friend, it will be seen, is rather irrelevant, as what the fact of Francis Lean having taken his watch and chain with him, or his tobacco pouch and pipe with him, has to do with my having spoken to him since death, is not

readily perceptible; but I promised to give the account intact, so my readers must have a little patience. I beg of them, however, to observe that the narrator of these facts, who "is prepared, if necessary, to verify his narrative by a declaration on oath," *never saw any more of him.*

"The boat reached the shore safely, and the crew were allowed to wander around the town for a few hours. Between four and five in the evening they pushed off, so as to get to the ship before dark. The second officer was steering the boat, and Lean still rowed the bow oar. When about half way off to the ship a blind swell rose close under the boat's bow, and this was followed by a huge, breaking wave, which 'over-ended' the boat. Lean was, *apparently, killed instantly* by the boat in turning over, smashing his head in; *at any rate, he never rose again.* Five of the occupants found themselves clinging to the boat, and two were missing. One of the missing ones was, however, a prisoner on top of the thwarts, under the boat, and, by pushing out the plug, he was enabled to breathe freely. The accident had been witnessed from the shore by the port captain, and a boat, put off, picked up the floating survivors and towed the boat on to a little beach, when the sailor underneath was liberated, more dead than alive. When the accident occurred, the boat's crew were laughing heartily at a tale which Lean had just told them. * * * A reward was offered the next day, and *a body* was found about twenty miles away, and Captain Bradshaw rode a dreary journey to see it, *but it was impossible to recognize the once handsome youth,* for he was a very, very handsome lad. *However, the body was, no doubt, his,* and received a decent burial, and it was our intention to erect a monument to our comrade's memory, but the Chilians cleared us out at a few hours' notice, and we were unable to do so. * * * He was a splendid specimen of an English lad of eighteen

years of age. Upright, truthful and plucky, and full of fun and devilment, and I am sure his spirit would not lie. I think—nay, *I am sure*—I know him better than 'Miss Marryat' could have done."

This narrative of Francis Lean's death, which Scrutator is ready, without enquiry, to pit against my word, is, after all, then, but *a second-hand account,* Mr. Davis not having been present at the time, nor able to tell, except by hearsay, what may, or may not, have taken place during the "few hours" spent on shore, to create ill-feeling amongst any of the crew. In my book, *I* speak only of what I have seen *personally;* Mr. Davis, more privileged, apparently, is ready to take his oath to what he has *not* seen, but only heard from some one else. It was "*quite impossible,*" he says, to recognize the body found as that of Francis Lean; yet, *it was, no doubt, his,* which proves him to be of a credible disposition, more so, perhaps, than myself. He asserts his friend to have been "upright, truthful and plucky, a specimen of an English lad." I wish I could have added that he was so! Poor Francis! Did he ever tell his intimate friend (who, so impudently, asserts that he is sure that he knew him better than myself) that he was closely connected with a legal case, the details of which are too abominable for publication; that it was the chief reason of his being banished from home, and made his own father declare that he could not stand the sight of him? Colonel Lean is still living. He could corroborate everything which Mr. Davis' ill-advised interference has compelled me to say here, if he chose; it would be impossible for him to deny them, for he made the facts too widely known himself.

Scrutator goes on: "The portions of the statement which I have omitted are either irrelevant details, or comments upon the supposed revelations of Francis Lean's

spirit. I have already stated that Mr. Davis is ready to swear to his statement, if necessary. I may add, that he appeals for corroboration to Captain Bradshaw, and the rest of the ship's company, and to the log of the 'Stuart.'"

What proofs would these authorities give us that I have not conversed with the spirit of my stepson? The ship's company and log could, doubtless, prove the time and manner of the lad's death; but they could not prove anything else, and, as for Mr. Davis' anxiety, *to swear to what he never saw*, I have known sailors who would swear for the pleasure of it.

"Now, let us look at the bearing of this narrative on the 'supposed' appearance of the poor lad to his stepmother after his death. To begin with, Chorillos is, by the clock, a trifle over five hours west of Greenwich. The accident took place, *apparently*, about 5 P. M., or a little after. Mr. Davis does not state the time that it would be required to row from the shore to the ship; but that it was a long and hard pull is shown, first, by the fact of the second officer putting back in order to get an additional hand; secondly, by the boat putting off from the shore 'between four and five,' in order to reach the ship before dark, the month being July, and the latitude twelve degrees south of the equator. The boat having started between four and five, and having been capsized half way between the ship and the shore, *it is a safe inference that the time was not much, if any, earlier than five o'clock*. What would have been the corresponding time in Brighton? Ten o'clock, or a little later. Yet, Miss Marryat is under the impression that she saw Francis Lean on the esplanade, at Brighton, before dark, on the same evening. *And, evidently, it was some time before dark*. She saw him smiling at her, and she 'hastened' up to him; but, just as she reached him, he moved off. This *implies* that she recognized him at a

distance of some paces; and, to recognize with certainty, at such a distance, the features of a man, believed to be at the other side of the world, *implies* that it was still daylight."

Not so fast, Scrutator, if you please. No implications. You will not allow me any, and I would prefer your sticking to plain facts, as I do. I do not specify, in my account, the hour when I saw the apparition, nor the distance at which I saw it. I do not say *when* I went out for my walk, nor how long I stayed. All the information you get from me is that, at that time, it was light till eight or nine in the evening; and, I believe, I only mentioned it in order to account for a woman walking alone at night in such a place as Brighton. I especially speak, afterwards, of the "unpleasantly bright moonlight that streamed into my bedroom window"; and, when one remembers the time of the year, and the moonlight, and the many lamps that are lighted on the Brighton esplanade, it is not likely that I encountered much "twilight," or "dusk," during my peregrinations; for, you go on: "*if* it was twilight or dusk, the supposed recognition ceases to have the slightest significance." But what about the second apparition, that appeared, under the moonlight, in my bedroom; and how was it that both should have appeared on the 9th of July, a date which even the omniscient Davis cannot deny is the one of Francis Lean's death.

"On July the ninth the sun would set about twelve or fourteen minutes past eight, and *it cannot have been* much later than this that the 'supposed' apparition was seen. At 8:15, by Greenwich time, it would be 3:15 in Peru, and, at that time, Francis Lean was on shore at Chorillos. Even putting the apparition as late as 9 P. M., Greenwich time—when daylight would be all but gone, it would be barely four at Chorillos, and the 'Stuart's' boat had not yet been

put off from shore. It would seem, therefore, either that the young man's phantom, or spook, or whatever it may be called, appeared at Brighton from one to two hours before his death, or Miss Marryat's eyes deceived her. Personally, I prefer the latter alternative, more especially in view of her subsequent vision of Mr. Lean smiling at her, in the crowd on the pavement, as she was driving through the streets of Poplar.

"Now, as to the circumstances narrated by Mr. Lean's shade when 'materialized' by the doctor. On the first point, the spectre is clearly right; there was, certainly, no foul play. Not only was there no foul play, but *there was not a suspicion of foul play,* nor, so far as Miss Marryat informs us, a particle of evidence to warrant her putting the question."

Here I interfere again, to remark that Scrutator is writing of what he knows nothing. There was a good deal of suspicion in the minds of more than one person about the manner in which Francis Lean's death was brought about, or, rather, I should say, the accident by which his death was brought about, and I was *decidedly warranted* in putting the question I did to the spirit who appeared to me. The doubt had been put into my mind by other persons—persons who certainly knew a great deal more about Francis Lean's previous life and private affairs than Mr. Davis did.

"But the suggestion having been raised by her question, observe how the 'spook' catches it up. Although there was no foul play, there was a quarrel, he says, a quarrel about a woman. There was a fight, and, in the fight, the boat was upset, although the spook very generously admits that he was as much to blame for the occurrence as the comrade with whom he was fighting. Every word of this *is pure invention,* but it is a trifle, beside the next state-

ment. 'How was it your body was never found?' asks the lady. She was unaware, you see, that the body *had not only been found, but buried;* and, for the second time, she leads the poor spirit into a trap."

Again is Scrutator reckoning without his host. Colonel Lean and I were certainly aware that *a body* had been picked up and buried; but Francis had told us before, through trance-mediumship, that it was *not* his body, and, since the captain confesses *he could not recognize it,* who should know best about the matter?

"His body, he replies, had been dragged down by an under-current, and was floating off Cape Horn, before even a reward was offered. Thus, not only is the non-recovery of the body explained, but a second imputation is cast upon a dead man's shipmates. Alas! poor ghost! Cape Horn (although he does not know it) is distant from Chorillos 2,624 miles, and no current could carry a human body that distance *without knocking it to pieces,* even, if to facilitate matters, all the sharks between Cape Horn and the Peruvian coast had been exterminated.

"As a matter of fact, however (although this, also, he does not know), the poor ghost's body was washed ashore twenty miles from Chorillos. A reward (although he does not know it) had been offered for the recovery of his body, within a few hours of the accident, and long before any portion of his anatomy could, *by anything short of a miracle,* have drifted to Cape Horn, his remains (although he is unaware of it), were *decently interred in the soil of Peru.* In short, the statements put into the mouth of this unlucky ghost are, from beginning to end, a *tissue of impudent lies,* not only contradicted, at each point, by the evidence of flesh and blood witnesses, but preposterous upon the very face of them."

Now, I want my readers to observe how very foolish a

presumably clever man may make himself when he is eager to prove that which he wishes and believes to be true. Had Scrutator been in the witness-box, and confronted with Sir George Lewis, or Sir Charles Russell, with these last assertions, he would have been turned inside out, like an old glove, and sucked dry, before he had known where he was. In the first place, he says I had *no warrant* to put the question about foul play to Francis Lean. Here he is utterly wrong; he knows nothing of what he is writing. Secondly, he affirms that I did not know the body had been found. Certainly not, and *no one knows it.* Thirdly, that, because the current could not carry a body out to Cape Horn without *knocking it to pieces,* Francis Lean's body was *not* carried there. Did I say that it arrived uninjured at Cape Horn? A body is a body, whether battered or not. Fourthly, that the spirit did not know that a reward had been offered for his body; whereas he said his body was at Cape Horn *before the reward was offered.* Fifthly, that he is unaware that he was decently interred in Peru. He was, and so are his friends to this day. It is a mere conjecture, and the "impudent lies" are more likely to be on the other side.

"What is the conclusion?" goes on Scrutator; "after having tried hard to prove a fact which is too much wrapped in mystery to be proved at all, there is a choice of four: (1) Either Francis Lean's spirit returned to earth, for the purpose of hoaxing his stepmother, and suggesting slanderous imputations on his comrades; or (2) Mr. Davis has grautitously come forward, from no conceivable motive, to perjure himself, in order to impugn the veracity of his departed friend; or (3) Miss Florence Marryat has concocted the alleged revelations of her stepson's spook, for the purpose of hoaxing the public; or (4) Miss Marryat is, herself, the victim of an impudent fraud. The first two alter-

natives I dismiss at once, and the third does not seem to me worthy of consideration. I have no doubt that Miss Marryat honestly believes that she saw Mr. Lean at Brighton and London, both, on the occasion when she was awake and the occasion when she was asleep; nor do I doubt that she was introduced to what she supposed to be the materialized shade of Mr. Lean, by various mediums in America. That she really saw, in the latter instance, anything more spiritual than the bogus bogeys, which have been publicly exposed and held up to derision a hundred times on both sides of the Atlantic, no *sane* person, who reads these lines, will doubt; nor will any *sane* person have any difficulty in seeing that the bogey, or the 'doctor,' who worked it, knew just as much about young Lean's fate as Miss Marryat herself, and invented the rest, with the highly interesting results above recorded. Cordially and ungrudgingly do I acquit Miss Marryat of any intention to deceive. Nevertheless, a lady, who can, at this time of day, put forth a bulky volume, made up entirely of *stale mediums' tricks,* and *pretended spirit revelations,* most of them of the same character as the above, and many of them *infinitely more grotesque, or offensive,* deserves, to my thinking, very little mercy. To paraphrase the familiar line, evil is wrought by stupidity, or credulity, as well as by deliberate intention; and that evil, in all sorts of shapes, must be wrought by the circulation of such a mass of pernicious nonsense, as is contained in this one volume, admits of very little doubt."

And here ends Scrutator's very valuable contribution to the cause of Spiritualism and lenient criticism on a fellow-literateur's work. The meaning of it is obvious. The article is written against Spiritualism, not against me, and, in furtherance of that end, he would have accepted the testimony of an idiot out of Earlswood Asylum. He hates

the name of Spiritualism; he has never honestly enquired into it, and he utterly ignores, in his endeavor to prove me a fool, the names of all the clever and scientific men who have attested to its truth. They, too, are, doubtless, fools, or insane, in his eyes; only Mr. Davis, and himself, being in their right minds. Now let me recapitulate the accusations against me, which induced the publication of this long-winded article:

(1) I cannot have seen the spirit of Francis Lean on the 9th of July, 1880, because he was drowned at five o'clock, and could not have appeared at Brighton before ten.

(2) His spirit must have lied, in saying his body was carried out to Cape Horn, because it was buried in Peru.

(3) He lied in saying there was a quarrel about a woman.

(4) Also, on the authority of the master mariner, in addressing me by any affectionate term.

And I affirm, that *not one* of these accusations has been proved.

(1) I never fixed any particular time, except the date of the 9th of July, for having seen the boy's spirit.

(2) There is no proof, whatever, that his body was not carried out to Cape Horn, or that the one buried was his.

(3) There *was* a woman in the case, and there *had* been disagreements between himself and another person, on board, on that subject.

(4) I need only appeal to those of his family, who knew us both, whilst Francis lived, and to those who saw and heard the spirit speak to me afterwards, for its contradiction. Scrutator makes more than one allusion to what "sane" people would do, or think; but is he not aware that each one of us is ready to believe our neighbor mad, for doing such things as we would shrink from ourselves? One man we consider mad, because he will not give up the fatal habit of drinking, which is hurrying him to his grave;

another, because, spite of all warnings, he allies his name with some low woman, who has been common property; and others, again, may rightly be considered lunatics for riding full tilt against their favorite *bête noir*, and landing themselves in an action for libel for their pains. At any rate, I think, considering who *I* am, and who *Mr. Davis* is, that Scrutator might have given a fellow-laborer, whom he "cordially and ungrudgingly" acquits of any intention to deceive, a hearing, as well as a perfect stranger, of whose reliability he knows nothing, except on his own report. Mr. Davis, doubtless, knows all about latitude and longitude, and the mean time between Greenwich and the seaports of the world; but he knows nothing about Spiritualism, and he has not made out his case. If any one blames me for speaking out, the blame must be laid at his door. Next time he has a desire to thrust himself into public notice, he would do well to consider whether he knows what he is talking about. He has proved to be the worst friend poor Francis Lean ever had. No one knew anything about the lad; his death passed as unnoticed as his life had done, except by those who were nearest to him. Mr. Davis has raked up his memory from a desirable oblivion; and, in consequence of his impertinent and ungentlemanly attack upon me, has forced me to say what I would much rather have kept to myself. It was hardly likely that I should have been expected to grieve much for the loss of a stepson of whom his nearest relations said, on hearing he was gone, "Thank God!" Still, the fact remains, that I was the only woman who went into black for him, as I was the only woman who had done anything for him during the last years of his life. It has remained for his intimate friend to leave on record what a grateful and honorable spirit he possessed; so much so, that he will not even believe that death may have opened its eyes to his injustice and ingrati-

tude. All I can say is, that I trust, when I die, no intimate friend of mine may, in like manner, expose the worst traits in my character, for no earthly reason but to see his own name in print. For, still, after all the slanderous insinuations that Scrutator has chosen to make against my veracity and clear-headedness, the fact remains—to which I am prepared, like Mr. Davis, if need be, to make a declaration on oath—that I have seen, touched, heard and spoken to, the spirit of Francis Lean.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW TO INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM.

Almost every correspondent I have had on this subject has asked me how he is to investigate Spiritualism in order to obtain the same results that I have. Now, I cannot *promise* any one the same results that I have been fortunate enough to secure, though we can all try for them. For, in the first place, it depends, in a great measure, on the mediumistic forces of the investigator, though, I believe, we are all mediums in a greater or lesser degree, and were intended, from the creation itself, to have the capability of holding intercourse with the Spiritual world. But the power has been pushed out of sight, and allowed to lie fallow until it is only here and there that it exists so strongly as to come to the front without the volition of its possessor. I am a physical medium, and though I cannot procure materializations by myself, I am said to impart much force to those I sit with. This is the secret, I suppose, of my invariable success. But, even with me, it has taken much time and trouble, and perseverance, to obtain the undeniable proofs I have of everlasting life. But, before people enter upon this most absorbing pursuit, they should know a little of the truth concerning the way in which the spirit leaves the body, and why it so often appears at the time of death, and then, perhaps, not for some years afterwards. With regard to this parting of the spirit from the body, we have been brought up in as utter ignorance as we have of almost everything else concerning ourselves. What is the first thing we do when

any one, whom we have been watching, perhaps, through a long sickness, appears to lose all his strength and sinks back in our arms, or on the pillow, unable to speak or move? The eyes glaze with exceeding weakness, the jaw falls open, the limbs shudder convulsively, and then are still. "He is gone!" exclaims some one, and we accept the apparent fact and rush from the room, perhaps, overwhelmed with grief. *Who* is gone? *What* is gone? His soul, you answer; it has gone to Heaven; it is already thousands and thousands of miles beyond this earth; he can neither hear us, nor see us, nor know what we are doing. Servants, or, perhaps, utter strangers to the departed are called in to perform the last offices for the dead. Your friend has died, maybe, in the depth of winter. You have been keeping up fires, night and day, to try and preserve the warmth of the weak body; you have kept the windows strictly closed, and heaped blankets and feather quilts above him. The professional layer-out comes in; what is the first thing she does? The windows are thrown open, the fire let out, the bedclothes taken off, and the body of one who, perhaps, was too modest, during his lifetime, to uncover before any but himself, is stripped, washed, and straightened out on a board, on the bare mattress of the bed, covered with a sheet, its jaws tied up with a handkerchief, so close that, if animation were to return, the spirit could not cry out for assistance, and then it is left alone, locked up in the freezing room, without a chance of resuscitation. "*Without a chance of resuscitation,*" you will exclaim; "but the man is dead!" To your eyes, doubtless, but you may be mistaken. "Dewdrop" tells me that many an apparent corpse would revive, *i.e.*, the spirit might be lured again into the body, if a different course of action were pursued. She says that when a mortal is, seemingly, lifeless, *i.e.*, when the body is so weak

that the spirit has slipped out of it, it is not separated from it for some time after. If you have had a fire in the room, make it twice as large; if you have had none, light it. If the sick person has been lying under a mass of bedclothes, heap on more; if the windows have been open, close them—and often the spirit, from increased warmth, will be enabled to return, and the apparent dead recover as from a swoon. Your mistake is in supposing that, directly the spirit has slipped outside its body, it is gone; whereas, it is connected to the body by ligaments of light, that bind it to the brain, the heart, and the vitals, and sometimes these cords are not ruptured for days, or weeks, after it has left its earthly tenement.

The custom of letting the last offices we can perform for our friends devolve upon strangers, is a most cruel one. Don't imagine that the spirit does not know it, and see it; don't fancy it has been carried away to a sphere where it cannot see, nor hear, nor understand. When your friend quits his body, he often remains in the same room, as long as his body does. If he never returns into it, he, at least, sees all that is going on regarding it, and knows if it is being ministered to by strangers, who have no respect for his feelings, or by those whom he has loved (and still loves) on earth. The sensations of a spirit, when first separated from the body, have been described to me as most peculiar. It is but half awake; sometimes it does not know it has left the body; it feels sick and faint, and cold and weary. It cannot realize what has happened; at other times, it is fully conscious that it has passed over, and has cut forever all the ties of earth, except such as belong to the affections. The body is worthless, but we cannot treat it too tenderly, for the sake of the spirit who is watching all we do, and needs, perhaps, our sympathy and loving kindness, just as much as when it was attached

to earth. There it stands, beside the bed, dazed, bewildered, weak and trembling, like a child new-born from the mother! Remember, next time you are present at a death scene, that the spirit is there—in the room with you—longing to speak, perhaps, and to dry your tears and administer sweet comfort. Don't give way to any noisy demonstrations of grief—you may make it still more bewildered than it is; don't leave the poor body in darkness, and alone.

The Catholic custom of keeping candles burning at the head and foot of the coffin, has its origin in the knowledge that the spirit is still present, and that light will prevent anything evil from approaching it whilst it remains below. In many countries, too, it is the custom to sit up with a corpse until it is carried to the grave.

I had a friend, a medium, who was engaged to be married to a young girl, called Amy. This girl died very suddenly, greatly to his grief. She ate of some indigestible food, which suffocated her during the night. Her parents had her body laid out in the usual way, and made every arrangement for her funeral. Before it took place, however, Amy appeared to my friend, and told him to prevent her being buried, as she was not yet dead, *i. e.*, not properly separated from her body. The young man went at once to the father of the girl, and begged him to postpone the funeral, which, at first, he refused to do, the doctor having certified to the death, and the cause of it. Her fiancé, however, was so much in earnest, that he obtained a promise that Amy should not be buried till some signs of decomposition had set in. The body lay in its coffin, in the father's house, *for three weeks*, without experiencing the least change. At the end of that time, however, Amy appeared again to her lover, and told him, joyfully, that, at last, she was quite freed from her body, and they might bury her as soon as they chose. He went to the family with this news, and found that

the body, which had retained its freshness for so long, had literally fallen to pieces that very morning, and the coffin had been obliged to be closed.

The spirit of a brewer, who had been accidentally killed, once told me the story of his death. He said it had happened on a very hot day, when, overcome by sleep, he had been sitting on the shaft of his dray and nodding drowsily backwards and forwards. Suddenly, he found himself on his feet, wide awake, looking, in company with a crowd of strangers, at the body of a man who was under the wheel of the dray. At first, he felt very frightened, for he thought the accident had occurred through his negligence. He was aware he had been sleeping on his post, and thought he had run over some man in the road. He was terribly concerned about it, he told me, fearing he should get into trouble; and when the people fetched a doctor from the hospital (for it happened just opposite St. George's Hospital), he was eager to see who had come to so sad an end. The doctor turned the body over, and the spirit *saw his own face.* Even then he could not believe that it could be himself. He felt so much like what he had always done, and remembered nothing of passing out of the body; but when he was convinced of the truth, he said he became violently agitated, and wanted to come back to this world again. He followed the persons, who carried the body, into the hospital ward, and, whilst the doctors were examining it, to see if there was any possibility of assistance, he told me he made the most tremendous efforts to get into it again, but it was so maimed and broken, it was impossible. He might as well have tried to live in a house without roof or walls. He said he remained by his body as long as it was in the hospital, and, for some time, by the grave—where it was buried—he found it so hard to sever the links that bound him to it. But then he had been a very strong, hearty man, and he died most suddenly.

Such spirits have always more difficulty in disentangling themselves from their mortal tenement than those who have passed through lingering illness. But *many* have told me that they have attended their own funerals, and heard, and seen, all that passed there. More, especially, is this the case, with the spirits of men and women, who have had centered all their interests and affections in the things of this life—who have never cultivated their spirituality, but let it dwindle down till it gives out no more light than a farthing rushlight. And, mind you, that there are many such people who are, yet, very lovable, very good (in our sense of the word), and very kind, but who are wholly of the earth, earthly.

Some spirits pass out of the flesh so human that there is hardly any spirit in them at all. Necessarily, they must stay on this earth—earth-bound, as some call it; but I would rather say, within the belt of ether which surrounds the earth—until they are fitted to breathe a more spiritual atmosphere. As a spirit friend once said to me: "It is not because God does not wish them to rise. It is because they are still so human, that they could no more breathe the atmosphere of the higher planets than you could breathe above a certain altitude, if you went up in a balloon." And, even when they rise above the grossness of this world, if all their interests are centered here, they are very easily attracted back to it. Therein lies the danger of vehemently wishing for certain spirits to return and manifest themselves, when they do not come voluntarily. I imagine their friends over there are often doing all they can to keep them from coming back to earth (just as we would try to keep a drunkard from the public house), because the temptations here are too strong for them, until their spirituality has overcome their materialism, whilst the laments, and yearnings, and sighs of earth pull them the

other way, and they return here, only to acquire a fresh taint of carnal-mindedness, and undo the little improvement that may have been effected in them. I am speaking, now, of worldly people, hardened people, and those who have been really gross and wicked. With the young, and those who have lived pure and spiritual lives, I think, it is very different. In the first place, their spirits separate far more easily from their bodies, and, when separated, are carried away to a higher sphere, whence, if they return, it is to teach and succor those they have left behind, as my "Florence" does to me.

The spirits who have attained the highest spheres possible may return to this world to teach others how to follow in their footsteps. One spirit told me that the Christ himself, passes, at regular intervals, through all the spheres, from the lowest to the highest, to purify them. This statement is endorsed by the Scriptures, which tell us that, when Christ died, he went down to hell (or hades, *i. e.*, the place of departed spirits) "to preach to them who were, one time, disobedient." What would have been the use of his preaching to souls who were, already, according to the dogmas of the religion taught us, damned in hell? He preached to them, in order that they might aspire to rise and progress. The next life is a life of progression. As soon as we are disencumbered of the flesh, our eyes are spiritually opened, and we see the sins of which we have been guilty; not as we saw and disregarded their weight whilst on earth, but in all their breadth, and depth, and height, and length. We shall see ourselves as we are; we shall see the enormity of our sins, the sorrow they have caused others, the evil effects they will have, "even unto the third and fourth generation," until we loathe ourselves, and long to be purged of the evil done in the flesh. And, with the first sincere desire to improve, we shall

commence to rise, until we have attained the presence of God. It may take years, hundreds of years, thousands of years; but, however long the purgatory, the happiness will be attained at last. Christ spoke of the law of progression, when he told the Scribes and Pharisees that the harlots and publicans should go into the kingdom of Heaven "before them." The parsons would tell us that the harlots and publicans will never go into Heaven at all, but be immediately condemned to their favorite, hell. O, what would they do, if robbed of their good, old hell? But Christ did not say so. He, evidently, thought that the very sins of which the poor harlots and publicans were guilty—the lavishness, the generosity, the weakness and the carelessness—were more likely to succumb to a knowledge of themselves, and change to virtue, than the bigotry, narrow-mindedness and self-conceit of the Pharisees.

But I am forgetting my subject, which was to speak of the departure from earth of the young and (comparatively speaking) innocent. My own dear child (not "Florence," but another daughter, whom I have lost since her), on her first return to earth, when I asked her what her sensations had been on entering the spirit world, replied: "When I had passed through the narrow gate of death, I met my Father, God, Who blessed me and bade me *go onwards;* and, immediately, I found myself in the arms of Granny Marryat (by which she meant my mother), and I have been with her ever since." She, evidently, then, did not remain for one minute on the earth sphere, but went to the place appointed for her, at once.

I have a young lady friend, the daughter of a family moving in the highest society, who is a wonderful medium, though the fact is known to no one but her intimate friends. Her father passed on, many years ago, leaving his widow with a large family of sons and daughters to

bring up, as well as a large property to manage, which one may say he has done, entirely, for her since, through their mediumistic child. She became controlled by her father, shortly after his death, since which time he has constantly held communication with her mother, giving her advice about her children, and her land, etc. The mother, in consequence, learned shorthand, in order to take down her husband's words, as he uttered them through her daughter's lips; also typewriting, that she might transcribe them afterwards. She showed me several large volumes of these typewritten words of counsel, to which she is constantly referring. But the circumstance which I was about to relate, concerning this young lady medium, is as follows: Some few years since, she had the misfortune to lose her elder sister, a most beautiful girl of twenty, who died, after a few days' illness, of pleurisy. Edith (as I will call the young medium) told me that she was with her sister during the course of her illness, and that she witnessed, clairvoyantly, the whole process of the spirit leaving the body. She said that, on the last day of her earth life, her sister was flushed, excited, and slightly delirious, tossing about on her pillows, and talking incoherently. About this time, Edith observed a film, like a cloud of smoke, gathering above her head, where it gradually spread out until it had acquired the shape, lengthwise, of her sister's body—a fac-simile, as it were, of the dying girl, only without coloring, and suspended in the air, face downwards, about two or three feet above her. As the day wore on, and the delirious restlessness gave way to the weakness of approaching death, Edith could see her sister's feverish color fade, and her eyes grew dimmer, whilst, simultaneously, the vapory form, suspended in the air above her, began to be tinted; first, very faintly, then, by degrees, more and more, until it glowed with the life that was rapidly depart-

ing from the body. The dying girl grew weaker and weaker, until she lay back on her pillows, speechless and unconscious. As she did so, the spirit above her, which was still bound to her brain, heart and vitals by cords of light, like electricity, became, as it were, a living soul. As her sister breathed her last earthly breath, Edith saw the spirit sway from side to side, until it stood upright by the side of the bed, very weak, apparently, and scarcely able to stand, but still the living presentment of the corpse, which now was stretched in death before her eyes. As Edith was watching this wonderful sight, she saw the spirits of her father and grandmother, who had also died in their house, appear, and support the new-born spirit between them, passing their arms beneath hers, whilst her head rested, like that of a fainting person, on her father's shoulder. After they had held her thus for a short time, she seemed to revive somewhat, at which they ruptured, with their hands, the cords which bound her to her body, and, rising, with her between them, passed through the window, where Edith saw them all three floating up a smooth green hill, until they vanished out of her sight.

Can it be wondered at, that people who are blessed with such visions, are unable to despair when those they love leave them for a little while?

Mrs. Russell Davis had a friend, who died, lingeringly, of cancer, and was very anxious she should be with him at the last, and, as the time of his death was pretty well known beforehand, she was able to comply with his request. She has told me that his great anxiety was, that his wife should come to conduct him over to the distant shore, and it had been promised him she should do so. As Mrs. Davis was sitting by his side on the day he died, she saw his wife's spirit standing at the foot of the bed. The dying man also perceived it; for, rising suddenly, he stretched

out his arms towards her, and she opened hers, when Mrs. Davis actually saw the husband's spirit shoot out of his body, as if it had been his double, and fly into the arms of his wife, whilst his corpse fell back upon his pillows.

Andrew Jackson Davis, an American writer, has published a little pamphlet, which, I think, can be procured for a few pence, in which he gives the full description of the departure of a spirit from the body, which he saw like the birth of a child from the mother—the cords of light which I have mentioned serving instead of the umbilical cord—whilst the reclining attitude at first, and the extreme weakness afterwards, on attempting to stand upright, all combine to carry out his simile.

Some spirits have spoken to me of having been "so terribly wet" on first recovering consciousness after death. All mediums who are fully entranced, will tell you they have been carried *through water*. This corroborates the old heathenish idea of the river Styx, over which the dead were ferried by Charon. In the Bible we find various allusions to the same thing. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; the deep floods shall not overwhelm thee." "Florence" has told me that she always looks at me *through clear water*, and that, sometimes, I seem such a long way off to her, when, in reality, I am quite near. She has said : "You seem to me as if you were at the bottom of a well."

I think it is wise and right that you should know a little about such things before you commence to investigate Spiritualism. The notion that you can command your spirit friends to return, or bring them back, or call them up or down, is only born of the universal ignorance concerning the truth. If they are not dwelling within the belt of ether that surrounds the earth, I do not think they can return at all, unless sent on a special mission

from God. If they still remain *on this earth,* and you give them the opening to communicate with you, they will, doubtless, find little difficulty in doing so. If they talk differently, from what you anticipated, from a spiritual being, remember that it is quite possible that they may not be so enlightened on that subject as yourself, and *believe themselves to be still in your world.* Many spirits whom I have conversed with have utterly refused to believe that they had passed over. Now, if you wish to investigate the truth of Spiritualism for yourself, the first thing to ascertain is, *are you thoroughly in earnest?*

It is of no use taking up the pursuit of a science out of curiosity—sitting at a table with a few acquaintances one evening, and, on the next, with a totally different party; going away for a couple of months, and beginning afresh, as the humor may take you, with anybody who may express a wish to join your circle. That is not the manner in which you would commence the study of Greek or Latin, or any abstruse subject, on the accomplishment of which the welfare of your future depended. In that instance, you would obtain all the information you could regarding it, first, and then you would sit down to master the alphabet, and learn the sounds of the letters, and the meaning of the words, until, by little and little, you crept on to interpret the sentences. If you sincerely desire to investigate Spiritualism for yourself, you must do it in like manner—crawling before you can stand, standing before you can walk, and walking before you can run.

But the majority of people, interested by what they have read, or heard, and, fired by a desire to see and converse with some departed friend again, apply to me for the address of a reliable medium to whom they can go, and are, doubtless, much disappointed when I tell them

that, on principle, I will recommend no one of them. The reason I answer them thus is, because I know that, if they rush, in their ignorant state of mind, to a public medium, they will, in all probability, be disappointed of seeing any spirit whom they can recognize, and the result will be hurtful, both for Spiritualism and themselves. These are the people who, having rushed pell-mell to a public seance, and seen nothing to convince them of the truth, create, perhaps, an unseemly disturbance, or go about, afterwards, telling all their acquaintances that there is nothing in Spiritualism; that Mr. So and So is a fraud; that the forms they saw were living persons dressed up to imitate spirits, and they are convinced that the whole thing is humbug. So might they, with equal reason, in their anxiety to learn Greek, attend a lecture, given in that language, and declare, because they could not understand what was going on, that Greek was only a mass of unintelligible gibberish. To such people I do not address my instructions, but to those who are grieving for the loss of friends so dear to them, that they would not meet them in a public seance room for all the world. Do not think, however, from my saying this, that I decry, or disbelieve in, the integrity of public seances, or the mediums who hold them. Many of my most convincing proofs have been given me in public, as I have frankly recorded. But that was long after private investigation had convinced me that what I saw was true. Public seances, in my opinion, are for Spiritualists, not for enquirers. There is more than one medium with whom, whenever I sit, I know beforehand which spirit friends will communicate with me, because they have come so often through the same source, that they experience no difficulty in doing so. But were a perfect stranger to sit beside me at those seances, he would probably see nothing to interest him, and begin to suspect that I

must be one of the medium's confederates, because so many manifestations appeared for me.

Most public seances are made up of sitters who attend regularly, night after night, and whose spirit friends have, in consequence, gained so much power, that they leave no opportunity for the friends of outsiders to manifest. This is why I invariably advise beginners not to attend public seances, but to begin by sitting at home. After they have gained some knowledge and proficiency of the science they are investigating, it is probable that their friends will name the medium through whom they wish to materialize and show themselves, in which case they would be right and wise to follow their wishes.

Now, let me suppose that two or three friends are agreed on this subject; that they all are sincerely interested in Spiritualism, and equally anxious to communicate with their departed friends, and I will tell them how to set about it. First, then, I advise you to read all you can upon the subject, and you cannot do better than begin with the Bible, that you may be able to confute the arguments of those who would try to turn you from your purpose, on the score of its being wrong. After which, you might go through a course of modern authors. There are innumerable works published on Spiritualism; a list of which you can procure from the offices of the spiritualistic newspapers, or from "Borderland." The authors who have interested me most, have been Robert Dale Owen, Colonel Olcott, Alan Kardec, Edward Maitland, John Farmer, Epes Sargent, and Andrew Jackson Davis. Read "Buddha and Early Buddhism," by Arthur Lillie; "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," by R. Dale Owen; "Nineteenth Century Miracles," by Emma Hardinge-Britten; and "'Twixt Two Worlds," by John Farmer. Take in Mr. Stead's magazine, "Borderland," where you

will find, each month, a list of the articles that have appeared on Spiritualism, besides a library list, where you can procure more books, to read, on the subject than you will get through in half a lifetime. Get the newspapers, too, that are dedicated to it, "The Two Worlds," "Light," and "The Medium," in which you will often find valuable information, and the addresses of certain mediums, with notices of what meetings are held for Spiritualists, and what lectures delivered for them.

And when you have learned all you can from the experience of others, *sit at home*; not desultorily, as I have said before, but regularly, and steadily. If there is a spare room in your house, which you can devote to the purpose, so much the better. It need not be a large room, and it need not have a fireplace, so long as it has a window.

This is how "Dewdrop" described a perfect seance room to me: "It must have no carpet, no curtains, nor hangings of any kind, except a dark woolen curtain drawn across the window, so as to exclude the light. There should be no pictures on the wall, nor ornaments of any kind; and the furniture should consist of a deal table, without a cloth on it, and as many chairs as are required must be cane-seated, so as to let the influence through. When you are not using the seance room, it must be kept locked, and no one allowed to enter it. The morning after you have held the seance, let the curtain be drawn back, the window thrown open, the table and chairs scrubbed with soap and water, then lock up the room till it is used again. Pure spirits will not come where there is dirt and dust. They cannot breathe in such an atmosphere. Keep your seance-room perfectly clean, sweet and private, then you will get good manifestations."

These rules are very simple, and easily complied with.

Investigators, who are in earnest, had better make a note of them.

Many people place musical instruments in their seance rooms, and set a musical box going as soon as they sit down. I don't like this plan of making a noise, and I don't think that it is necessary, or that the spirits like it. It has had its meaning, not to drown (as many sceptics aver) the noise made by the medium, and his confederates, in dressing-up, but because the sound agitates the air, and keeps it moving, which is favorable to manifestation. This is better accomplished, however, by the sitters singing in harmony, for their united voices not only stir the atmosphere, but the action of exercising them, throws off the aura from themselves, which the spirits use to work with. Only *let it be in harmony.* The terrible discord sometimes produced by the efforts of people trying to sing together, who have never practiced doing so, is enough to drive the spirits, or mortals too, for that matter, to the furthest distance they can attain. This is a subject which, surely, might be taken a little trouble with. You would not like to make a fool of yourself before mortal company —why treat your spirit friends to such an exhibition? Surely, it would be worth while, before commencing your sittings, to select such quiet hymns, or songs, as you can all join in, and practice them until you are perfectly acquainted with both words and music. Loud singing is not what is required ; in fact, it is very undesirable, and I have, repeatedly, heard it stopped by the influences themselves. What they want is low, sweet harmony, produced by all the sitters, simultaneously. *Why* is not our business to inquire ; if the spirits did not wish it, they would not demand it. And, here, let me caution you, if you want successful seances, to follow *just what you are told,* in every particular, and you are sure to do right.

When you have sat for a little while, some one spirit will probably take the control of your seances, and you must do just as he tells you. If he desires that certain sitters change their seats, they must do so ; if he says they are to leave the circle altogether, they must obey him, or the rest will suffer. And, in this matter of choosing your circle, you cannot always be guided by your own wishes, or the wishes of your friends. It is better to have a small number, at all events, at first, say four or six, and, as a rule, the sexes should be equal, and the constitutions opposite ; thus, if the circle consists of six persons, there should be three men and three women, and if three are fair, sanguineous temperaments, the other three should be dark, and calmer of disposition. I do not mean to assert that this rule is absolutely without deviation, or that a successful circle may not be made up where it is not entirely carried out ; but, *as a rule,* it should be attended to as far as possible.

It does not follow, because a person is deeply interested in Spiritualism, or is very anxious to see, or speak to his departed friends again, that he is fit to sit in a circle, or in your particular circle, at any rate. It is a sad fact, but a fact, nevertheless, that a very ardent desire to see a particular friend is often the very means which prevents the spirit manifesting, the excitement and agitation acting in some way, which I cannot explain to you, to prevent the materialization. This is the reason that, *as a rule,* spirits do not manifest for some time after death, or until the grief of the survivors has somewhat calmed down.

When you have chosen your circle, therefore, do not be too sure that all will be allowed to continue in it; but your spirit friends will soon let you know their wishes on the subject. In selecting the sitters, you must make sure that they will sit *regularly,* and not as it is convenient to them.

If they cannot promise to give up other engagements, or pleasures, for the sake of sitting, don't admit them at all.

Over and over again have people asked me to form a circle at my own home, and, for the sake of the cause, I have complied with their request; but it has, invariably come to an untimely end from the same reason. The circle would meet, perhaps, two or three times, and then Mr. Jones would send an excuse because he was obliged to keep an engagement, or Mrs. Brown had friends to dine with her, or young Hoop-de-dooden-do was obliged to remain at home, because it was his sister's birthday. But they would all be sure to attend next time. Not with me, however. I always made it a point, that the first defalcation (unless from illness) was the last, and the defaulter scratched off the list of sitters; by which means the circle usually dwindled down to myself in about a month's time. That is why I think, when the circle can be kept strictly within the precincts of home, it is far better; and I would rather break through the rule of having an equal number of each sex than depend on the punctual attendance of outsiders. I would rather sit with a sister, or a husband, only, and keep the seance room sacred, as I have described, and the seances for certain days, than I would risk having the circle broken; for each time that happens you will have to begin over again, from the beginning.

But I will suppose that you have made up your little circle, and arranged your seance room, and practiced your hymns or songs, then the next thing is to fix the day and hour of sitting, and *stick to it*, whether it be one evening a week, or two evenings; whether it is to be at seven o'clock or eight; do not vary it, if possible, by so much as a minute. If you have a guitar, you might bring it into the room; and rolls of stiff paper, gummed into the form of a trumpet, are very useful for speaking tubes, through

which you may hear the direct voice of your friends. Sheets of notepaper, and pencils also, should always be at hand, in case any spirit present may be able to write to you, instead of speaking.

And now, supposing all things to be in readiness, you, and your party, enter the seance room at the appointed time, lock the door after you, close the window, draw the curtain over it, and take your seats round the table, on which you have placed a candle and box of matches, in case of need. Some people join hands when they sit. This is not necessary, except as an evidence of good faith, and to prove that no one is attempting to hoax his neighbor. Still, at the beginning, it is as well, perhaps, to do so, in case anything startling occurs, that everybody present may be convinced that it is not a trick. You may have to sit for some time before anything takes place; you might have to sit for many evenings before you heard even a little tap upon the table; but, if you are not prepared to persevere, you had better not begin at all. It is very unlikely, indeed, that *nothing will ever occur;* I have never heard of such a case, but it may be some time first. When the first tap sounds on the table, or the first tilt, or upheaval occurs, don't let there be any screaming, or hurry, or agitation about it. Let each one of the circle ask, quietly, and in regular turn, "Is that for me?" and when the right person puts the question, the table will usually repeat the signal. Often it happens that the spirit comes for no one in particular, but for the circle, so that, if it responds to no one, that question may next be put. The great thing, however, is to establish the communication; after that things generally go on swimmingly. You must talk to the tapper just as though you were addressing a mortal, only be calm and deliberate, or the influence may not hear you distinctly. The usual rule is to tell the com-

municating spirit, if he is going to speak to you through the table, that you want him to tap once for "No," twice when he is uncertain, and three times for "Yes"; also that, in spelling out any communication he may wish to make, you will repeat the alphabet and he must tap, or tilt, when you come to the right letter. The first thing you will, naturally, ask, is his name, and for this purpose repeat the alphabet very slowly, for the way spirits rap is by throwing the magnetism they gather from the circle down on the table, where it explodes like detonating powder, so that they require a little time to make their preparations. If, when repeating the alphabet, you hear several raps in succession, it is generally meant to intimate that the spirit has missed the letter, and you will have to begin over again. This method of communication, which appears very tedious on first trial, becomes rapid by practice, so that I can converse, by its means, almost as fast as I can by word of mouth.

But, should there prove to be a medium amongst you, you will soon blossom out into better forms of communication, and leave the poor table far behind you. With regard to mediums, there are many more in the world than people think for, and there are very few circles of six persons which you could call together without finding one in their midst.

Some of your friends may suddenly develop trance-mediumship, or go under control, or hands may touch you in the dark, or the paper tubes be rattled about, or the guitar strings touched and sounded. Now, if any of these things happen, don't be frightened, because there is nothing to be alarmed at.

Spirits cannot hurt you, even if they were so disposed, and, though I admit that powerful manifestations, when first witnessed, are *awe-inspiring*, you must pass through a

certain baptism in order to obtain that for which you have assembled together. Should one of your sitters, therefore, commence suddenly to talk in a strange voice, or an unknown tongue, leave him quite alone until he has finished what he may have to say. He will come to no harm; but if you were to interfere, by trying to rouse him, or by letting in the light upon him, you might do him a serious injury. Or some one may go under control, *i. e.*, he may appear to fall into a deep sleep, as if he were dead. Don't attempt to wake him! The spirits will probably make use of him, whilst in this condition, to give the circle some manifestations, and they will take care of him and bring him back at the right time.

The direct voice is when the spirits speak to you with a thorax and gullet of their own, instead of using the organs of speech of a medium. This is one of the manifestations I love best. I think it is more satisfactory even than seeing our departed friends, because, when spirits are materialized, so much power has been exhausted in order to build up their bodies, that they seldom talk much. But to be able to ask them questions, and to receive their answers, is most satisfactory. You will be very lucky if you procure such a manifestation. There are a dozen different ways by which your spirit friends can give you proofs of their presence amongst you, before they show themselves. They may bring articles from other rooms in the house, and place them on the table; pick flowers from your garden, or other people's gardens, and put them in your lap; you may hear their feet pacing up and down the floor, or see the spirit lights floating about the room. These are, sometimes, like tiny stars, and, sometimes, like eggs in shape, or little comets with a tail. You may have sweet scent thrown over you—a very common manifestation—or you may feel your chairs pulled backwards, or,

sometimes, taken right away from under you. Some one amongst you may develop writing-mediumship, which is generally evidenced by a convulsive shuddering in the right arm, accompanied by a species of electric shock running up it. In such a case, place writing paper before the person, and a pencil in his hand, and you may get spirit communications through him. Only a few weeks back, sitting alone with a friend, with her hands held fast in mine, I got five letters written by different spirits, in the space of four minutes, each one in a different handwriting. If there should be a powerful physical medium amongst you, you may even get levitation, *i. e.*, the medium may be carried away from the table, chair and all ; in some instances, up to the ceiling, so that he can touch it with his finger. Should this occur, don't jump up from the table, nor break the circle ; if you are holding hands, do not unloose them, but wait, patiently, till your friend descends to the floor again. The spirits know perfectly well what they are about, and will bring him back quite safely, if you will let them do so in their own way. But if you loose hands, or make a commotion, you will break the chain of aura through which they are working, and, as likely as not, cause him to be thrown, or let fall, violently to the ground. I believe, if you set about your investigations in the manner I have mentioned, that, in nine cases out of ten, your efforts will be crowned with success.

There are, of course, a number of phases of Spiritualism which you may never be able to enjoy in a private circle, because they are more rare ; yet, I believe, it only needs perseverance to experience most of them : Levitation, the direct voice, trance-mediumship, automatic writing, direct writing, clairvoyance, healing-mediumship, prophecy, materialization, spirit-photography, and inspirational speaking, are grand gifts, and not within the scope of every-

body. Yet, I believe, we are all mediums, in some way or another, and it is impossible to say what we may, or may not, develop, until we have tried it.

If, after a reasonable trial, you find you can procure no manifestations (which, I think, is very unlikely), or that your progress is tediously slow, you might procure the address of a reliable medium, and engage him to *sit with you at your own home.* Very often, the presence of a fully developed medium calls forth the latent powers of a circle, sets them going, as it were, and gives an impetus to their efforts.

Some mediums are particularly happy in developing others, so that one or two sittings with them will prove what the circle is worth. The presence of a good medium in your seance room, also, will permeate it with its influence and that of his controls, and prepare it (as it were) for the operations of your own spirits.

Beginners in Spiritualism are often both surprised and disappointed, because spirits, who are either perfect strangers to them, or acquaintances in whom they have taken no interest, manifest, while their own beloved friends do not come at all.

I know how disappointing this is, for I have experienced it myself.

When I commenced my investigations, a certain spirit called Priddis, who had been the gardener of an old friend, but almost unknown to myself, used to visit me continously, and, sometimes, to my annoyance, because I thought he kept other spirits, whom I should rather have communicated with, away. But, through his means, I found out, afterwards, many of my friends were enabled to approach me, who otherwise might not have been able to do so, and when his work was done, Priddis disappeared, and I have neither heard, nor seen anything of him since.

There is another caution I should like to give to tyros in Spiritualism. Never attempt, by persuasion, or prayers to the Almighty, or earnest entreaty, to invoke spirits who have not come to you of their own accord. Spirits can only visit us as they obtain permission from God, and we should take them as they come, not thinking so much of who they may be, as of the fact that their reappearance on this earth demonstrates the truth that we live forever.

I have seen the evil effects of a persistent appeal for the reappearance of a particular spirit until the prayer was answered, as prayers sometimes are, for the destruction of the suppliant.

When I first became interested in Spiritualism, and, in my ignorance of the subject, was apt to sit with any one who asked me to do so, a young man, called Charlie H——, whom I must not designate more particularly, for the sake of his friends, used to frequently join our circle. His father was a tutor, and amongst his pupils had been a young man of the name of Edward Ogilvie, to whom Charlie and his brothers and sisters had been, as children, much attached. Mr. Ogilvie had long before drunk himself to death, but Charlie H—— cherished a great affection for him, and never sat without asking some of the communicating spirits to fetch his friend to speak to him. One evening, the name Ogilvie was rapped out, and we thought he had come. It proved, however, to be the spirit of William Ogilvie, a cousin to Edward, who manifested for the sole reason of begging Charlie H—— not to try and recall the spirit of his friend, as it was not fit to visit earth, without danger to itself and to him. Charlie, however, would not be advised, and continued to entreat that Edward might be allowed to return, if only for once. At last he came, and continued to come for some little time. I observed, however, that, directly Edward appeared,

Charlie would fall across the table in a deep sleep, so that he did not derive much benefit from his friend's communications. But, from that time, from having been a sober, well-conducted young man, Charlie H—— became so careless, that three times during the ensuing season I was compelled to warn him that, if he took so much liquor at my house, I should leave off inviting him to come there. He made one or two faint efforts to shake off the influence that was creeping so fatally over him; but without success, and in the course of a few years he, too, had drunk himself into an early grave. This case always recurs to my mind when I hear people entreat for certain spirits to be allowed to manifest.

We are not the best judges of who should, or who should not, come back to us. I would receive every spirit, who wished to communicate with me, with attention and respect; but once I found them to have been careless livers whilst on earth, I would be very careful how I encouraged them to return. And, here, let me say a word as to the spirits with whom you hold converse. Remember that, in dealing with them, you are dealing with mortals who have only cast off their mortality and retained that portion of themselves by which they could have done you most harm whilst here below, *i. e.*, the spirit, intact. Don't fall into the absurd error that, directly a spirit is loosed from the body, it becomes purified and angelic. Most of those who return to this earth, or who have never left it, are far more mortal than spiritual; have passed over, indeed, with so much more humanity than spirituality in their composition that they are almost as gross and carnal as they were whilst on this earth.

Never hold communication with any spirit who refuses to give you his name. Be assured, in that case, that he is ashamed of it, or wishes to pretend to you that he is other

than he is. "Try the spirits whether they be of God." And, should they talk frivolously, or wickedly, *have nothing more to do with them.* If they refuse to leave the table, get up and leave it yourself. They will soon understand it is useless attempting to gull you. Don't imagine, because they may swear or abuse you, that they must be, necessarily, emissaries of the devil. They are no more so than the men you meet sometimes in this world—half-brutalized, blaspheming sinners, who hate every one who tries to be a little better than themselves. If you were thrown in the society of such men in this life, you might be tempted to try and do them a little good. In like manner, you may often do the poor spirits good, by helping them to wish for better things; *but not when you are first commencing to investigate Spiritualism*—not until your higher controls have taken possession of your circle, and cast their protection around it, and are able to keep evil influences from coming too near you. If these careless spirits got the ascendancy first, they might never give it up again. You cannot be too particular on this subject. And the way to protect yourselves is to commit your little circle to the protection of God, and ask him not to allow any spirit to approach you, but such as will do you good, instead of evil.

At the period I have before alluded to, when I knew but little of such matters, and was in the habit of sitting, without respect to the surroundings of the sitters, a great many young men "about town" used to drop in for a seance. But, after a while, I found they brought the spirits of so many "unfortunates" in their train, that my table was literally infested with them. They came for nothing, apparently, but to ask me to pray for them; but they almost excluded every spirit of a higher condition from my table. This is not to be wondered at, when one

remembers that each one of us is surrounded by a band of influences, not only those who have been given the charge of us, but such as have been attracted to us by a similarity of taste and living. The spirits of drunkards congregate round the man who, spite of all warning, insists upon killing himself by indulgence in his fatal habit; because they derive some slight pleasure from the refraction of his sensuality; and their influence, unconsciously acting upon him, drives him on and on, until he has lost all restraint over himself. How well this theory is demonstrated in the following parable:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none; then he saith: 'I will return into my house, from whence I came out'; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh unto himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

So that we cannot be too careful with whom we hold converse, in the body or out. I had a most interesting conversation with my old friend, John King, the other day, on this subject. For the benefit of such of my readers who may never have heard of John King, I may say that he is the father of the celebrated Katie King, who used to appear so regularly, at one time, through Florence Cook (now Mrs. Elgie Corner). The name adopted by both father and daughter is assumed, John King's real name being Sir Henry De Morgan, and his daughter's, Annie Owen De Morgan. Sir Henry was a buccaneer, or pirate, who lived during the reign of Charles the First, and through part of that of Cromwell. He was a bold sea-rover; and, after an exciting career, was executed for treason, on the high seas. But, whatever he may have been whilst on earth,

he appears to have entirely expiated his sins now, and to have become one of the best and kindest of spirits, always working for the good of others. I have known him through Williams, and Herne, and Eglinton, and Husk, and always the same in voice and feature and general kind-heartedness. I derived great pleasure, a short time back, by receiving, through the goodness of M. James Tissot, the French artist, a lovely engraving of his picture, entitled "L'Apparition Mediumistique." The painting represents M. Tissot's first wife, supported by John King, as he prefers to be called. M. Tissot sat with William Eglinton, when on a visit to London, and was so charmed by the appearance of his first wife, to whom he was tenderly attached, that he invited Mr. Eglinton over to Paris, and, whilst there, he painted, from their materialized forms, the portraits of both Madame Tissot and John King. The oil painting was, I understand, exhibited in the Paris Salon, and a favored few of M. Tissot's friends have received an engraving of it. I am proud to number myself amongst them, and the engraving has a double value for me, not only as a memento of the giver, but because the portrait of John King is exactly as he has appeared to me, through each one of the mediums I have named. It represents him as an exceedingly handsome man, of about forty, with high-bred Jewish features, and a most benevolent cast of countenance. He appears as though supporting Madame Tissot, or encouraging her to come forward. Both hold a spirit light, of the size and shape of an egg, in their hands, and, whilst the young woman is looking up shyly, John King glances down with a sort of patronizing, or paternal, air upon her. I prize this engraving more than any other spiritualistic memento I possess. John King told me that I could have no idea of the large number of spirits it took in order to make one seance a success. "I

have, at this moment," he said, "a band, or cordon of spirits surrounding this house, of perhaps a quarter of a mile in width, and, beyond them, I have stationed my out-posts and pickets to give the alarm, if necessary." "The alarm for what, John?" I asked. "In case any malevolent spirits should try to approach the circle! They would do so, soon enough, if they had the opportunity. Perhaps it will astonish you to hear that there is more opposition in the spheres against Spiritualism than there is on this plane. Many spirits consider that I, and others like me, are wrong to visit this earth after we have left it. They say we cannot do so without carrying back a taint of mortality when we return, to the detriment of those who dwell in the spheres.'

This was an entirely new idea to me, but I saw the force of it, from my own small experience. The other world is very much like this one. Men do not immediately part with their prejudices there, any more than with their follies and vices. If Jones was a liar whilst upon earth, don't swallow everything he may tell you, when he returns here; for, rest assured that, by the time his spirit has been thoroughly purged of its worldly wickedness, it will have soared too high to return, except as a preacher, to his fellow-men. But, for my own part, I should be dubious of believing him to the end of time. So be wary. See all you can, and hear all you can, and weigh the proofs of sincerity in a nicely adjusted balance. But if your spirituality is in yourself; if you are sincere and circumspect, Jones (and such as Jones) will not come near you; or if your acquaintances leave them behind them (as mine did), they will cleave to you only so long as you encourage them to do so. I got rid, during my earliest experiences, of a very unpleasant spirit who used to annoy us with his language and sentiment, by simply leaving the table whenever he appeared. He used to attempt to disguise himself by assum-

ing false names, and pretending to be extremely pious, but we always found him out in the end and instantly broke up the seance. When he found we were in earnest and kept to our word, he took himself off, and, for years, I have heard nothing of him. Treat all careless, "larking" and low-minded spirits in the same fashion, and they will not trouble you long. But the surest remedy is to see that no careless, or ungodly, person joins your circle. Keep your seance room free from all bad, earthly influences, and the spiritual ones will not come near you.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT SPIRITS HAVE SAID TO ME.

Many people have asked me the question : "But what do the spirits tell you about the place they live in? What are their dwellings like? Do they sleep and eat and drink like mortals? Have they any employment? In fact, what is the next world like?" One of my correspondents has gone so far as to tell me, not too politely, that if my spirits cannot answer such questions, to gratify the curiosity of man, they are no good at all. I am saying the same thing over and over again ; still, it seems necessary, once more, to repeat that the use of Spiritualism is to demonstrate that there is another world, not to make us so excited by a description of it, as to cause us, perhaps, to lose half our interest in this one. "If they can't do that, they can do nothing!" says one sceptic, rudely. I never supposed that they could *not* do it. That they may not be *permitted* to do it (for reasons into which we cannot enter), is a much more likely theory. How much of the mysteries of another world did Christ reveal to His disciples, and the people he preached to? Positively *nothing!* He mentioned it constantly, but he never gave any description of its joys or pleasures ; of what they were to consist, or with whom partaken. The only allusion to the happiness of Heaven in the Scriptures is in the text : "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them who love Him." If the disciples were left without a more particular knowledge of the glories of

Heaven, why should we, degenerate mortals, expect to enjoy a further revelation? And, again, you may hold converse with a dozen spirits and each one may come from a different sphere. "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you." The spirits which come from the lower spheres, know no more than ourselves, with the exception of the blessed truth, that there is no death. They smile at our innate fear of death; for, though, with them, to ascend to a higher sphere entails a sleep-like death, having once passed through it, they think no more of it than we do of lying down in our beds after a long day's work. Of course, it is not likely that I should have had so many opportunities of conversing with spirits without putting questions to them about their lives in the other world, and what they do there, etc. I have sat for hours, sometimes, talking with them, through trance-mediumship, on all sorts of subjects; but, as I did not take shorthand notes at the time, it is as difficult to remember all that we said to each other as it would be to recall the conversations I have had with my fellow-mortals. As with all friendly converse, however, if we cannot remember the exact words used, the effect of the communication remains on our memory: so my mind is imbued with spiritual ideas and revelations, though I could not transcribe them, word for word. But they have, mostly, been explanations of God's dealings with men, and the punishments we bring on ourselves by wilful sin, and very seldom descriptions of the spirits' dwelling-place. It seems to me, as if this revealing of trivialties were either forbidden or disapproved of. For, were it all deception, how easy it would be for them to invent a picture of perfect happiness. But, from all I have gathered at various times, I have never heard one word that differed from the Bible teaching, nor one that did not promise a purgatory for

those who do not love God, and peace for those who do. I was speaking to a spirit called Aimee, once, on the importance or non-importance of creeds. We were sitting either side of a small, round table, at the time, and Aimee put her hand on the center of it.

"Creeds," she said; "creeds are some of the wickedest things on earth. They have caused more bloodshed, and wrangling, and hatred, and wrong, than all the wicked people put together. Do you suppose there will be any creeds in the spheres? Do you think they will ask, when men go over there, if they are Jews, or Catholics, or Protestants? Not a bit of it! They will be judged by only one standard: Have they tried to love God and their fellow-men? If they have been cruel to them, they have been cruel to God. It will be no excuse that they did it for the sake of religion. They will be told that such religion is a lie. Here is God," she continued, putting her finger on the center of the table; "some of you crawl round the table before you reach Him; some take a short cut right across; others lose their way, and wander about as if they were in a labyrinth. But what does it matter, do you think, so long as they get to Him at last? God looks down and laughs at your creeds. He would rather see a man, who never goes to church, share his crust with some one who wanted it worse than himself, than hear all the prayers of all the churches."

"Shall we all get to Him at last, Aimee?" I asked.

"Most certainly you will. It may be a long 'at last' for some—thousands and thousands of years, perhaps, I cannot tell—but no one can ever be lost forever, as your parsons say, and I'll tell you why: When God created man, He breathed into him the breath of life, and 'man became a living soul.' So, you see, man's soul is the breath of God, part of the life of God, and part of God's

life can never be damned forever. There's where the parsons make such a mistake; a big mistake, that they will have to correct some day. They will have to—what do you call it in English?—*eat their own words.* They have put words into the Bible that were never there. They tell people that God created man to be good and happy; that He intended him to live on this earth forever, but that his own disobedience upset everything. Then, if this is true, God's designs turned out a failure. Don't you see that, if you designed a piece of work to be straight, and it turned out crooked, people would say you did not know what you were about, and your work was a failure. God's work *can't* be a failure; so, if He meant men and women to be happy and good, they *will* be happy and good, though they may delay the accomplishment of God's perfect work for a little time. But God's breath in hell—the only part of man that lives forever, to live in hell—that is rubbish, believe me. The parsons tell you, too, that Christ died for *all men,* the just and the unjust, that they might be *saved.* If that is so, then, if *one man only* is *not* saved, Christ's death was a failure. But the people who preach about Him never seem to see the discrepancies in their teachings. If God were a man, of course, an occasional failure would only be natural; but, since He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, a failure must be impossible with Him, especially one that involved all creation. It is a terrible, a wicked idea, to instill into men's minds, that God would condemn the creatures He made, and loves, to everlasting punishment. What is the good of a punishment, unless it is to teach people to do better in the future? How can a punishment that lasts forever give any one an opportunity of doing better? What would be the use of repenting? It would be needless torture. God is not a fiend like that—He is your loving Father."

"Are you very happy, Aimee? Do not you, sometimes, wish to return to earth, since you left it so early?"

"Never! I would not return, if I could. I am sorry for poor A——" (naming the man she was engaged to be married to). "But, after all, it was for his good that I was taken away, and I can watch over him better now than I ever could have done in this life. You want me to tell you about my present home. There is nothing to tell. I am a little nurse-maid, that is all. I am in the sphere where all the little babies, who die before they know right from wrong, come, and I look after them. Your daughter, Florence, is in the same sphere. She came here when she passed over, and we are great friends."

"How many babies do you have to look after at a time, Aimee?"

"Four or five. Just now I have a poor, little boy under my charge, who was burned to death. He cannot forget the pain yet. It was so terrible."

"Do you eat and drink in your sphere, Aimee; and what do you wear? And do you ever sleep?"

"What a lot of questions you ask at a time. But I am not sure if I may answer them all. Yes, we eat and drink; but not the same sort of things that you do. We can clothe ourselves with our thoughts; *i. e.*, anything which we may think of appears upon us; that is why spirits, that visit their friends after death, often seem to be wearing the clothes they did whilst on earth. Because, in thinking of returning, they have thought, perhaps, of the last time they saw the friend they wish to visit, and so the clothes they wore then appear with them. As to sleeping, we rest, but we do not sleep as you do—we do not lose consciousness. We have the power to stop all brain action at will, so that a perfect rest ensues, though we know what is going on around us the while."

"Dewdrop" has never been very confidential with regard to her spiritual surroundings. She has told me that she lives in a wigwam, with her mate, The West Wind. She has described him as a very handsome "brave," young, and very much attached to her; but, though Dewdrop is so very open on other subjects, calling a "spade a spade," without the slightest ceremony, I have observed a remarkable reticence in her whenever she approaches the subject of her affections. She scorns the idea of letting The West Wind visit this sphere, or showing himself to mortals. When I remarked to her, on one occasion: "But you cannot marry in the spheres, as we do on earth?" her answer was: "What is the best part of your earth marriages? Isn't it when, at some moment, you seem suddenly to realize the truth that the man you love is really one with yourself—one in heart and soul and body? I know it's very, *very* seldom that it happens in earth life; but it does, sometimes, and then you feel it is worth all the rest put together, and a glad conviction enters your soul that you will have love forever, and ever, and ever. That's what our marriages are like—the very best part of yours, the very cream of it."

When I lost my eldest daughter, my grief was very terrible at first, and I was in despair for some time afterwards. I neither saw, nor heard, anything of her, and Dewdrop's efforts to console me I shall never forget.

"Look here, Florence," she would say, "you mustn't fret after Eva like this. You mustn't fancy, because you don't see her yet, that God is angry with you or her. Now, let me tell you; it's just this way: When Eva was a little child, you always loved her too much to hurt her; but, if she was disobedient, or naughty, in any way, you used to say: 'Now, my child, you have forgotten what I said to you again. I don't want to whip you, because I love you

too much; but I must make you remember what I say, so just go into that corner, and stay there till I give you leave to come out.' That's what God has done with her. Eva was what the world calls a good woman; but she often did things she knew were wrong, as we all do, and so God *has put her in the corner, to make her remember.* She wants to come back, and see you, and her sisters, and her children; but He says: 'Not yet; when you have learned the lesson I design to teach you, then you shall go.'"

"Is she quite happy, Dewdrop?"

"Not yet; but she is not in pain, and she is not unhappy. I often see her. I can do so now. She is in a large garden, quite alone, sitting under a tree, with her baby in her arms. Her hair is loose; it falls down to her knees. She is very thoughtful. She is thinking of you, and her life whilst here; but she knows that, some day, you will all be together again. And she will come back to you whilst you are on this earth" (which prophecy has already been fulfilled).

Every description given to me by spirits of God's dealings with men has been so touching, so merciful, so fatherly and just, so unlike the dreadful hell-fire and pitchfork teachings of this world. A general theory with them appears to be that of expiation—that whatever sins we have committed in the flesh we shall have to *undo* again when we pass over. Once, when speaking of a relative whom I very much dislike, I said: "I hope to goodness I shall never meet *him* again in the other world," and the answer was: "On the contrary, he will, in all probability, be the very companion chosen for you on entering spiritual existence. You will be compelled to live with him, until you have discovered all his virtues and your own faults, and see how much better he would have been, if you had known how to be his friend, instead of his enemy."

Aimee, in speaking of future punishment, once said to me:

"If you were teaching your little girl how to sew, and she brought you her daily task, carelessly done, with gobbled stitches and dirty thread, what should you do?"

"I should tell her to unpick, and do it all over again," I replied.

"Now, you've got at the very root of the matter. That is how God deals with us. He makes us *unpick our lives,* and do them all over again."

And, in support of this argument, a very striking incident happened, under my cognizance, but lately. A young relative of mine, called Annie, who was a married woman, with a large family of little children, had determined, in her own mind, that she would not have any more babies. There was some excuse for her, as her husband was not able to support them, and they were becoming a source of serious difficulty to her. So, when she found she was likely again to become a mother, she was rash enough to adopt some one of the various remedies suggested for such difficulties, with the result that she lost her own life, as well as that of her expected child. For some time after her death, she was described to me as being in a state of great melancholy, if not of suffering, and, more than once, I was told that, till she had expiated the sin of destroying her own child, by preserving the life of another, she would not be free to progress. Last year, I had a bride and bridegroom staying, for a few weeks, in my house, the bride having been a warm and intimate friend of the young relative I allude to. One evening, when Mrs. Russell Davis was at my house, the young couple also being present, she was, unexpectedly, entranced, and the voice of Annie, who had never manifested before, was heard uttering, with some difficulty, the words:

"Tell Mary—not—to do—as I did."

That was all. As the voice ceased, the manifestation ended, and the medium returned to her normal condition. Naturally, I could not say anything that night. But the next morning, as I walked with Mary, alone, in the garden, I introduced the subject as delicately as I could, and found out that she was in precisely the same position as my poor, young friend had been—with the prospect of becoming a mother, and hazarding her life to prevent it. When I entreated her to let matters take their course, the excuse was the one I have heard so often before. "But we can't *afford* to have a family," etc., etc. However, after some amount of argument and pleading, she gave in, and promised me that she would not do anything more to prevent what was before her. Soon afterwards, she and her husband left my house, and I only saw Mary at intervals. "Dewdrop" and "Ned" and "Florence" were very busy that summer, they told me, as they had to travel some distance every evening, in order to magnetize Mary to sleep, as she was suffering from insomnia.

"Why do you take such an interest in Mary?" I asked.

"Because, if her child is born strong and well, Annie's child will be taken out of her arms and given to another spirit to nurse for her."

"Do you mean to say that she has carried it in her arms all this time?" (It was six years since Annie had passed over.)

"Always! She has never been allowed to put it down for a single moment. That was her penance: to look at the face of the baby she destroyed, every moment of her existence. But she has saved Mary's baby, and the minute its earthly life commences, her penance will be over."

Mary's baby was expected to arrive about the middle of December, but no one knew any further. On the evening

of the 22d, I was sitting with Mrs. Russell Davis, and enjoying the manifestation of various direct voices, when I heard that of Annie, addressing me:

"O, thank God with me!" she exclaimed, "thank God with me!"

"What for, Annie?" I asked.

"I am free—I am free—I am free!" she replied, each sentence rising in crescendo, till she spoke as loud as she could.

The next morning I received a telegram to say that Mary's baby had been born at five o'clock the previous afternoon, a fine, strong, healthy boy, as he has continued ever since. Since that time, Annie has manifested far more frequently than she ever did before, and tells me she is free to visit the little children she left behind her, without a mother's care.

Florence has tried hard to describe her home in the spiritual sphere to me, but says that our language lacks words to express half she wants to say. In America, it may be remembered, she spoke of her "fields of roses," which she felt powerless to describe farther; of the "blue flowers" (typical of happiness) which she and I were to pluck together, and of the white "lilies" with which she always seemed surrounded. She has told me, since, that she will not leave her present sphere (although she might be in a much higher one) until I join her there; for, that our spirits are so closely united, one cannot rise without the other. Once she attempted to make me realize her spiritual home, but added that spiritual habitations changed with the will of the inhabitant. The house she was returning to, on that occasion, was entirely built of roses. She said the walls were made of the heads of every kind of roses piled up and "squashed together." But she has lived in houses which looked like alabaster, and others, like clear stones.

Mrs. Russell Davis' little daughter Mab, it may be remembered, cried because she could not have a frock like "Mrs. Lean's girl," by which she meant my Gertie. When asked to described the frock she so much coveted, she said it was all "white and clear, with gold flowers moving about it as if they were alive and something red underneath them."

Florence has always been so clairvoyantly robed in white, with blue flowers in her hair and bosom. Gertie herself told me, on the memorable occasion so ridiculed by the editor of "Truth," that she wore a frock and sash, and when her brother Francis "chevied" her round the fountain, he pushed her under the "silver water" and it wetted her sash. I asked her how she got her frock and sash, and what they were like, and she said that Florence gave them to her; that her frock was "like cobwebs, and her sash like flowers." The higher spirits are all dressed in white. Dark or dull colors appear to indicate an earth-bound, or unhappy condition.

Phyllis G——, an actress, with whom I was, at one time, intimate, has told me that the sphere, in which she was first located, was too awful for description. She said it was a country, without verdure, or water, or light. That it was always dusk, and the ground was composed of cinders, so that walking was painful, and the spirits, for the most part, crawled about it on their knees. Phyllis had been worse than careless during her lifetime, but it shocked me to hear she was undergoing such a penalty. I asked her what sort of people she was associated with, and the answer was: "The worst possible; murderers and thieves."

"But, Phyllis," I exclaimed, "what affinity had you with such as these?"

"I was a liar," she replied, "and there cannot be a worse sin than that of habitual lying. If a man can descend to

lying, he will stop at nothing. It is only our fellow-men whom we fear. We let God see what we hide from them."

This spirit had indulged in the fatal habit of drinking whilst on earth, and her agony, when wine or beer was on the table, or in the room, to find she could no longer indulge in it, was terrible to listen to. I have heard people say that, since Spiritualism gives a denial to the old world doctrine of eternal damnation, it must have a bad effect on the minds of sinners; since, if the universal belief was that everybody would, eventually, be happy, no one would try to be saved from the beginning. This is a gross error. I have never imagined a more dreadful hell than the spirits have described to me: Truly, the "worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." Fancy every wrong word we utter being spoken into the phonograph to be reproduced to endless ages; every wrong act we commit being photographed and preserved for the contemplation of posterity; and then fancy the utterers of those words, the doers of those deeds, being compelled to walk through a gallery of their own misdoings, whilst their blasphemies and obscenities sound on their ears, and all who walk with them know they did the deeds and said the words! Fancy the filthy-minded and impure, in body, being submerged in a sea of slime, too horrible for words to describe, which gets into their mouths and nostrils, and clings to their garments, and besmirches every part of them with its foul stench and feeling! This is what Dewdrop told me, but the other day, was the sphere for those men and women who forgot their sex, and their humanity. When I begin to think of what my spirit friends have taught me, and what they have told me, I feel as if they had transformed all my preconceived ideas of the future. They have shown me how, in the words of the Great Mikado, of Gilbert and Sullivan, "the punishment fits the crime"; how the words

of St. John are fulfilled to the letter: "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still." And never have my spirit friends said one word to me to weaken my faith in the goodness of God, or His immaculate justice and mercy.

Only the other day, my daughter Eva, writing to me, commenced her letter with: "O Mother! if you only knew the immensity of the love and goodness of God." And I have reason to have complete faith in what they tell me.

Ten years ago, I asked Dewdrop if I should ever bear another living child. I was anxious at that time to do so; and there seemed to be every probability that I should. She considered for a few moments, and then replied, in an uncertain manner: "I don't know quite how to answer your question. I don't see any present probability of it, and yet I seem to see, in the far future, a younger influence growing up beside you, and it is certainly yours—but it isn't Frank's" (meaning my husband, Colonel Lean), "no! there is none of his blood in it, only yours—yours. This prophecy made the domestic hearth flare up a little more brilliantly than usual, and I always regretted that Dewdrop had mentioned the subject, particularly as it seemed to be quite unlikely of realization. This very month, however, quite twelve years afterwards—now I come to remember dates—her prophecy has been fulfilled, by the charge of a little child, belonging to a near relative, having been thrown completely on my hands, where she will remain till my death, or hers. And so she will grow up beside me—this younger influence that has my blood in her veins, and not my husband's—as Dewdrop foretold. Again and again have I listened to prophecies from the lips of my spirit friends that appeared the unlikeliest things in the world to

come to pass, but they have always been fulfilled, and I never doubt, now, but that they will be.

Two years ago, Dewdrop told me that a great conference had been called in the spheres, and the spirits had come to the conclusion that Spiritualism had not made the progress it should have done, since it was first re-introduced to the earth, then forty years ago. They had seen that it had progressed only amongst the lower classes, and that, in order to give it an impetus, it must be brought before the notice of a more educated and refined set of people. They had, therefore, determined to select a certain number of laborers for the cause, who should have access to a higher circle of society, and amongst those chosen were Bessie Russell Davis and myself. "And mind," said Dewdrop, in conclusion, "that our workers will be paid, and well paid, into the bargain. We shall see to that, because, we know, that whilst you live you must eat and drink ; and no man can afford to give up his means of subsistence, even for the cause he has most at heart. But you will have to work, whether you wish it, or not."

This declaration has been followed by my having been the means of introducing the pursuit of Spiritualism to hundreds of people in the upper classes, so-called ; and to having brought forward mediums, and established circles, where they were never dreamt of before. Quite accidentally, as it seemed, a proposition was made to me, this spring, to deliver a course of lectures, in the provinces, on Spiritualism, which I saw fit to accept. It was so successful that it is to be followed by an extended tour in the autumn, and just about the time when this little book meets the public eye, I expect to be visiting town after town on that account. All this came about without the least exertion on my own account ; and, I have no doubt, was all designed, and put into execution, by my spirit

friends. My friend, Mrs. Davis, could also tell you that she has never been so busy in her life before. Strangers pour in upon her from every quarter of the globe, for sittings with "Ned" or "Dewdrop"; men from the Antipodes, who require oil or water located, for their business; professional ladies and gentlemen out of an engagement; mothers who have lost their children (and these are the most generous clients, as they are the most faithful lovers); wives separated from their husbands; husbands, who would like to be separated from their wives; all these, and dozens of other poor mortals, who cannot see a yard before their noses, and long to find out if they are steering, right or wrong, for the haven of happiness, take up her time so fully, that it is difficult to get a sitting with her at all. Many other workers for the cause have, doubtless, been chosen by the spirits (of which I feel certain, although I have no authority for saying so, that Mrs. Corner and Mr. B—— will form two), and Spiritualism will find its way, more and more, into the circles of the educated and highly bred. The fault has been, that it has been left to strike its roots for so long amongst those whom we consider ignorant and unfit to associate with. It is a science, which the most learned of men have found themselves unable to cope with; how, then, could we have expected it to flourish when its knowledge, or rather practice, was confined to those who took it as it came, and had not the capability, nor power, to analyze whence it was, or by whom directed? I received a very graphic reply from a spirit, to whom I had put the question, why mediums, as a rule, were such ignorant, and often, brainless people. "Because we don't want a furnished house," she said; "we want an empty one. If the brain is too full, and capable, there is no room in it for us. We cannot oust the spirit, nor put it to sleep. It is like a wide-awake child.

Directly we think it is off, it rouses up again. We cannot compete with an active, inquiring, clever head. We must work through the simpler organizations, and leave the profound ones to realize that we are truly there. The medium knows nothing of what is going on while she, or he, is asleep, you see. If we were to influence the clever ones, who would be left to spread the knowledge of Spiritualism?"

There are one or two private experiences, which have occurred to me lately, that, I think, I might, appropriately, introduce into this chapter, which is so wholly personal. Bessie Davis has touched on one of them in her reminiscences, but she did not give it *in extenso*, so it will bear repetition here. It is in reference to "Ned," and my horse, Beauty-boy. I purchased this horse as a colt, and broke him in myself, *i. e.*, very badly indeed, so that he took all kinds of liberties with me. One day, a well-known palmist looked at my hand, and said to me: "You drive a spirited horse, in a high cart, do you not?" I answered in the affirmative, and he continued: "If you do not part with him, you will have a serious accident. I see a horse frightened by a train, paralzyed with terror, and bolting down a road. I see twenty minutes of agonized suspense, and then a crash, and darkness. You will not be killed, but you will sustain a fracture of the skull, which will be followed by months of inertion, and incapacity for work. If you wish to avoid this, get rid of that horse at once." I felt duly impressed by this warning, especially, as my friends did not consider the colt safe, and had been worrying me, for some time past, to sell him. I did not understand, however, how it was that "Ned" had not cautioned me with regard to him, and when I put the question to him, he laughed at the palmist's prophecy.

"D'ye suppose, lass," he said, in his rough way, "that if

theer was any danger, I'd have let you drive him for so long? It's naught but coltishness, and his fun leike. You don't drive *him*, he drives *you!* Keep a tight hand on him, lass, and he'll be all right. Never you fear." I was convinced, for a time, but my friends were not, and begged me, so hard, to follow the advice, which coincided with their own opinion, that I put the horse, for sale, into a jobber's hands, and the next day a purchaser was found for him, and my Beauty-boy was led out of my gate. As soon as he was gone, I repented me of the evil, and wanted him back again. I fretted for a week, during which time "Ned" chaffed me, unmercifully, on my want of decision, and, finally, I sent for the jobber and asked him if he could buy the animal back for me. He said he supposed it might be done, if I were disposed to give half again as much money as I had received for him, only a week before. He had been purchased by a captain of volunteers, for a charger, and he did not feel inclined to part with his bargain. I did not see the fun of rebuying my property at so exorbitant a rate of interest, so I flew again to "Ned" and asked what I should do.

"Well, I told't thee, lass, not to pairt with the colt. I told't thee it were only coltishness-loike on his pairt that made him spirity. Awh, well! and now ye want to git him back. Well, I'll try to see what I can do for ye, but I don't see no way at present; but we'll see what's to be done."

I thanked him, but returned to my home without any hope that I should get back my favorite. The next day, however, I received a hasty note from the jobber to say: "If you really want your horse back again, send me a check for the money you received for him and I think I can manage it for you. Captain J—— took him out to sword exercise this morning and he kicked him twice over his

head; so, as he is a timid rider, he declares he will not mount him, again. But if you want him, don't delay to send the money, as if the news that he is in the market gets wind in the town, there will be more than one offer for him by to-morrow morning."

I sent the check back by the bearer of the note, and, before night, Beauty-boy was housed in his own stall. Naturally, I hurried to "Ned" with the news. "How did it happen, Ned?" I asked. "I cannot understand it at all. Beauty-boy has never kicked in his life before. It is not one of his faults. What made him do it? What would Captain J—— have done to him?"

"The captain didn't do nothing, lass," was his quiet reply. "I was theer myself, *and I tickled him under the tail.*"

I have experienced two instances of a spirit appearing immediately after death, lately. The first was that of my own dear daughter, Eva, who passed away, in my house, at twenty minutes to eight o'clock, in the evening of a certain 20th of July. She died in childbirth, and her death was very unexpected and sudden. An hour before it occurred, the doctor attending her assured me she was no more dying than I was myself. Her oldest brother, Frank, was touring the provinces, at the time, with a theatrical company, and the only intimation he had received of his sister's illness was in a hurried note from myself, in which I had told him of her illness, and added: "The doctor assures me there is no danger; but I cannot help feeling anxious." On the evening she passed away, he returned from his theatre about eleven o'clock, and went to bed. He had a friend occupying the same room, and, after Frank had dropped off to sleep, this friend woke him, saying: "Do look there. There is a woman standing at the bottom of your bed." My son did as his friend desired

him, and distinctly saw his sister in the direction pointed out to him. She was remarkable, through life, for the length and luxuriance of her hair, which was unbound, he told me, and hanging loose to her knees. She was dressed in her night-gown, and stood there for some minutes, smiling sadly at him. The sight made such an impression on him, that he wired me the first thing in the morning: "Send news of Eva." His telegram was crossed on the road by one from me: "Eva left us last evening at eight o'clock."

An old and very dear friend of mine, whom I will call by her Christian name, "Annette," passed away, also, very suddenly, of pneumonia, some two years since. She had just moved into a house near mine, and I was with her during her last hours. She was, apparently, unconscious, for some time before she breathed her last, and her son and daughter fancied that she could not hear, or know anything that was going on around her. I cautioned them once or twice with regard to what they said, telling them that we can never be quite certain when complete unconsciousness has set in with a dying person. After she was gone, assisted by her daughter, I washed and laid out her body, and placed some white chrysanthemums and maiden-hair fern about the bed and pillow. I must tell you that, about a month previous to her demise, my friend had asked to accompany me to one of Mr. Towns' seances, as she was very desirous of asking him a few questions. Annette, like many other married women, had not led a particularly enviable existence, and had been, virtually, separated from her husband for some time past. The questions which she, *mentally*, put to Mr. Towns were: first, would her troubles soon be over? secondly, would she be worried by her husband's presence in her new house? and, thirdly, would her money affairs come all right? As these queries

were put mentally, I, of course, only heard the answers, which were given aloud, and were as follows: "Very soon. He will never enter it. Don't worry about that, or anything." As we left Mr. Towns' house, Annette squeezed my arm and ejaculated joyfully; "I am so happy! He has satisfied me on every particular!" She then told me what her questions had been, and the fears she had entertained with regard to her husband pursuing her to her new abode. A month after, she had gone from all trouble forever, and the house was still unpolluted by her husband's presence. She died in the early dawn of a Wednesday morning, and as soon as the arrangements I have mentioned were accomplished, I returned to my home, and went to bed, quite tired out. In the early dawn of Thursday, just twenty-four hours after Annette had left us, she wakened me. I saw her standing by my bedside, clad in a purple flannel dressing gown, which I had never seen her wear in life. She was smiling in her own peculiarly sweet way at me, but did not speak. She stayed long enough, however, for me to take in every detail of her personal appearance, and, especially, of the purple dressing gown. After she was buried, and he could be of no use, the husband turned up at my residence. He was, of course, overwhelmed with grief—bad husbands generally are. It costs nothing, and looks well, especially from a man who posed, as this one did, for a saint. He made one disclosure, however, that was interesting to me. He said: "You know how little I believe in ghosts, but a most curious thing happened to me the day after my poor, dear, lamented Annette's death. It was quite in the early morning—I looked at my watch afterwards, and found it was only four o'clock—and I waked, without any reason, to see my poor wife by the bedside. But the strange part of it is, that she seemed to be wearing a garment that she discarded years ago. The

fact is, when her mother was in her last illness, and Annette was sitting up, night after night, with her, the weather was very cold, and I brought her from town a blue or purple flannel tea gown, to sit up in, and I could take my oath that she wore that identical gown when she appeared to me. Or was it all a delusion on my part?" I then told him how I, also, had seen the same dressing gown, and believed that Annette's spirit had assumed it, because the gift of it was probably one of the very few kind things her husband had ever performed on her behalf. You must understand that it was to one of the late Mr. Towns' free seances that Annette had accompanied me, consequently he did not speak to her, except whilst under control during the evening, nor did he know her name, nor of the friendship between us. Fully three months after her death, I attended one of these free Tuesday evening sittings again, and Mr. Towns (who *did* know me well) addressed me the first of all the sitters. He said: "The last time you sat on that sofa, ma'am, a strange lady, dressed in black, with a veil over her face, sat by your side. I don't know if she was an intimate friend of yours, but she is sitting there now, in the same place, and in the same dress, and she has this message for you: "O my more than sister, who held me in your arms whilst I was dying, you were quite right when you said that I was not unconscious, though unable to move or speak, but heard every word that was uttered; saw everything that went on. I stood beside you when you placed the chrysanthemums on my hands, and on my pillow, and arranged my hair upon my forehead, and longed to thank you for your kind offices. Tell this man that his prophecies concerning me have been fulfilled, and in a happier way than I ever imagined they would be! Be a friend to my children for my sake, as you have ever been a friend to me."

"I have visited you once, and I shall visit you again, but not just yet—not for a long time to come. Good-bye."

Now, there are several things to be observed in this narrative. In the first place, Mr. Towns had never seen Annette before she visited him with me, and then only as one of a large public circle. It was, also, the first time that she had ever attended a seance of any kind. Then the questions he answered were mental ones, and, thirdly, there had been no communication between him and me since her death ; he had not heard that it had taken place, yet he could repeat accurately what had taken place at the time, and knew the fact of Annette having visited me since. If this is not mediumship, I don't know what name unbelievers would give to it. I have not seen Annette since, but I have no doubt that I shall ; if not here, at least in the Summer Land, where I hope, sooner or later, to meet all I have known on this sphere again, and to feel that they are friends. Many of my unknown correspondents have asked me for the address of Mr. Towns, who, I regret to say, passed over to the higher life, in the winter of 1892. As a clairvoyant, he is a great loss to Spiritualism; but his health had failed for some years past, and, with ill-health, mediumistic powers soon decrease. Some of his visions of the future were marvelously correct, but he exhausted his power in sitting so much in public, which custom, I have heard, considerably hastened his end on earth.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRITUAL CORRESPONDENCE.

There are several means by which we can correspond with our spirit friends. There is automatic writing, direct writing, and writing through the means of the Heliograph, Ouija and Planchette. The first named, automatic writing, has been fully explained by Mr. Stead, in his account of his correspondence with his friend "Julia." I have also alluded to it in a preceding chapter. A person's hand, or arm, becomes violently agitated ; sometimes, almost ludicrously so, so that he cannot keep it still, do what he will. This spontaneous jerking is sometimes accompanied by sharp pains, like the shocks of electricity, which run right up the arm to the shoulder ; sometimes by a sensation as though the limb were stiff and paralyzed. In either case, if a pen, or pencil, is placed between the fingers, and paper put before the medium, automatic writing will probably ensue, *i. e.*, the hand, after a few futile efforts, which produce only unintelligible scratches, will steady itself down and gain sufficient control to be able to form letters and words, or, perhaps, to draw faces, or flowers, or landscapes. Automatic writing, or drawing, is one of the commonest phases of mediumship. I have met dozens of people who were adepts at it. It has been known amongst Spiritualists for years past, though many people thought it a species of invention on the part of Mr. Stead. This was only because both they and Mr. Stead were so new to the science of Spiritualism. Planchette, Ouija, and the Heliograph, are all formed on the same plan and differ

very little in their construction. They are instruments made to facilitate spirit-writing, and may be used by one pair of hands, or two. In the hands of a good medium, they become very powerful agents, but beginners are apt to deceive themselves when using them. The tremulous agitation, which generally follows from keeping the hands in one position for long, is mistaken by them for spiritual guidance, and the unmeaning scratches and senseless lines and circles which follow it, are twisted into letters and words, which have been transcribed in their own imagination only. Still, I would not despise the day of small things. I have known of wonderful communications obtained through Planchette and Ouija, and, of course, if a spirit is really guiding the medium's hand, the facility with which it can communicate becomes enormous. I would, certainly, advise beginners, therefore, to procure one of these talking boards (as some people call them), and see what luck they get with it. They are very moderate in price. Six and sixpence, I think, being the highest charge. When using it, try not to be too curious to see what letters are being formed—turn your thoughts to something else—converse with the friend, who sits with you, on different topics; that is, if you can, and any communications you may receive, will be all the more convincing to your mind. A sister of mine, who saw Ouija at my house, carried it off to her own home, and has had marvellous correspondence through it since with an old friend, deceased, and this, in the face of the fact that she is not a Spiritualist, though a powerful medium. But decidedly the most satisfactory way of corresponding with our departed friends is by direct writing. This is when the spirits write their own letters without the intervention of any third party. In "There is no Death" I said that I had never satisfactorily seen the spirit of my old friend, John Powles, until I visited America. I am glad that I

need say so no longer. Since my return to England (or rather since publishing that book), I have seen him, heard him, and received a number of letters from him, the latter through the mediumship of Florence Cook (Mrs. Elgie Corner). The year before last, I spent the month of August with her at her delightful house, Usk Vale, in Usk, Monmouthshire. She had not sat then for twelve years. She had been sickened to death by the unfairness and bigotry of London investigators, who, as a rule, got all they could out of her, and then abused her for her trouble, until she had come to think that the life of a medium was the most miserable life in all the world. If the people, by whom she was surrounded, had shown any sympathy in Spiritualism, she, doubtless, would not have let her marvelous powers run to waste; but she had no friends of the cause near her, so she laid it all aside and never attempted to communicate with her friends on the other side. When I entered her house as a visitor, however, matters assumed a different aspect. We did not sit for the spirits, but they came after us all the same. It was beautiful, bright summer weather, and we were engaged all day in driving about the country, or sitting in the garden, amusing ourselves with the animals, or Florence's girls, and not thinking of anything more serious. But when the dusk drew on, and the children had gone out walking, and she and I were left to ourselves, our spirit friends took good care to remind us that we were not the only occupants of the house. Chairs would walk across the room to our sides—particularly a rocking-chair, which would commence to rock as soon as we found ourselves alone—raps would sound spontaneously on the walls and the floor, and direct-writing would take place on tables far beyond our reach, even if we had had any reason to deceive each other. In this way, I obtained several letters from Powles, who was the last person I ex-

pected to hear from through Mrs. Corner, as she had never been associated with him, either in this world, or since he had joined the great majority. A slight explanation is necessary to make the frequent allusions to C. B. intelligible in his letters. These initials stand for the name of a man who had greatly wronged Florence Corner, by leading her to expect she would be amply remembered in his will—inducing her to lay out a considerable sum of money in consequence—and then altering his will in favor of somebody else, without giving her the slightest warning of his intention. His death, therefore, left her and her husband in a difficult position, from which it cost them a considerable sum to extricate themselves. The spirit of C. B. was haunting the house at the time I was there, conscience-stricken, I suppose, and anxious to give some explanation of his conduct; but Florence would not give him the opportunity of speaking, she felt his influence to be so low. He, evidently, tried to do all he could to prevent Powles having any communication with me; for, wherever there is an allusion to him in these letters, a scratch, or dig, is made with a pencil over the words, as though he had tried to erase them. The first letter was written under difficulties, the pencil and paper being on the floor, under my chair. I give them just as they are written.

"It is very unpleasant to deal with C. B. His standing is low, morally and physically." (Over the word "morally" there is a most vicious dig with the pencil.—F. M.) "I am a sincere friend to this medium, and wish her well. Even now, C. B. is in the toils of a bad, unscrupulous woman. My dear heart, you and she will do a great deal, but be careful. She is heavily handicapped. God bless you, Flo. J. P. This man C. B. is low." * * *

The receipt of this communication astonished me. I could not quite understand who it came from, for the

signature was rather shaky, and I had received no previous intimation that Powles was about. A few days after, however, as Florrie and I were sitting alone, she was suddenly entranced by this spirit, C. B., who had also been an acquaintance of mine. He refused to go, although I told him we would have nothing to do with him after his dishonorable behavior to the medium; but I gave him such a bit of my mind that he found the place too hot for him and took his departure. The same evening, we put paper and pencils on the table, whilst we sat, clasping each other's hands, on a sofa near, in the dark, and the following note was the result. It was written on a piece of my own notepaper, with my name and address on it, which was not amongst the pieces we had placed on the table, and had been brought from the blotting-case in my bedroom. The word "London" was scratched out, and "Usk" substituted for it, but there was no date.

"My dearest, I feel I must tell you the great danger there is in allowing C. B. to come through this woman. I only knew her through you, dear heart; but I, also, know that you and she will be intimately connected, but *not just yet,* and we (or I, as representing those who love you both most dearly) ask you if it be worth your while to allow the visits of a low man (who, even in the midst of his grief at his injustice, still gives way to the pernicious influence of that bad woman) to spoil the lovely influence that is near. What if he tells you how he has made all so wrong? Will it put Mrs. Corner in any better position? No! it will only rake open the old sores. There is a bright and happy future coming. Do not spoil it by admitting a miserable, low spirit. My friend, we will see that it is all right. Show this to Mr. Corner. He is strong and sensible. Yours, as ever. J. P. My power is gone."

These last words were written, I imagine, because I had remarked, with regard to the first letter, that the signature was not like Powles' writing, and this one was not much

better, though quite legible. The third communication, also written on my own paper, was very brief.

"Dearest, we are weak to-night. I will tell you a great deal on Tuesday. I am finding out how to act. J. P. No strength. C. B. is here."

This letter, also, is scribbled over, as though C. B. had endeavored to erase the mention of himself. It was evidently written with a view to Florrie sitting with me for materialization, without being worried by C. B. (whom we particularly did not wish to manifest in that way), for the next alludes to the subject.

"We are doing very well, and we are glad that Mr. Corner does not wish C. B. to fix himself on Mrs. C. Believe me, he will (or would) do more harm than good. There is great worry coming for this woman, but she is doing right, though greatly misjudged, and is, and will be, vilified, but all will be right, dear, and you and she (same name and same heart) have a happy future. The very short interviews we allow are, simply, because of not allowing lower influences to predominate. I can use your paper more easily, so have taken what I require. Yours forever, J. P." * * *

The next letter was written under remarkable circumstances, and is a little history in itself. Powles, it will be observed, was still using my professional paper, which was stamped with my name and address. It was the only paper I had taken up to Usk, and I kept it in a leather blotting-case on a table in my bedroom. I had the most perfect faith in the honor of my friend Florence Corner. I knew she was quite incapable of deceiving me, by taking my paper to forge a spirit's letters on; but I also knew that the general public would not accept my testimony on the subject. The general public were not present at the writing of these letters; they would seize the smallest loophole by which

suspicion could creep in to declare the whole business to have been a fraud. So, for the satisfaction of those who will take my word for what occurred, I decided to secure my paper in such a manner that no one could get at it for the future; no one, that is to say, but a spirit. With this end in view, I took up my blotting-case one evening, after I had retired to rest, and turned out its contents. I found I had forty sheets of writing paper left. Those I folded in a larger piece, and tied the parcel round with cotton, writing on the outside "40 sheets." "Now," I said, to myself, "if I receive another letter written on my paper, and these forty sheets remain intact, I shall know it must have been taken out beforehand." I then fastened my blotting-case, placed it in my traveling trunk, locked the trunk and hung the key round my neck by a piece of string. I retired to bed; slept the sleep of the just, rose and went downstairs the following morning with the key round my neck, and without saying a word to anybody of what I had done. I think we all went to a flower-show and pic-nic that day. I know we were so much engaged that I forgot all about my secret precautions, nor did I remember them, even when Florrie and I, too tired to go out with her girls, sat together in the evening, working and chatting together. The room we occupied was a sort of boudoir of Mrs. Corner's, on the same landing as my bedroom, and next to it, but with no door between, only the brick wall. Suddenly, as we were talking to each other, Florrie gave a shriek, and some large substance came through the wall and flew past her head into my lap. "What is it?" she exclaimed, in a great fright. "Who has done it? Somebody is playing a trick on us!"

I put my hands on the parcel. It was my blotting-case, and, with it, had been thrown a cork penholder, which I used to prevent cramp, and which had, also, been in the

case when I had locked it up the evening before. I was astonished, but immediately told my friend the story I have told you here. She was most incredulous, and would not believe it. She was sure some one had got at the key of the box. I then produced it from round my neck, where it had been all day. "Come, Florrie," I said, "before we open this blotter, let us get a light and examine my traveling trunk." Accordingly, we went into the next room and tried the lock of the box, but all was fast, as I had left it. We then unlocked it, but there appeared to be nothing disturbed inside. The next thing was, to open the blotting-case, and count the sheets of paper, which were folded and tied with cotton, just as I had left them. There were only thirty-nine of them. Examining the other pockets of the case, we came upon the following letter, *enclosed in an envelope, fastened down, and addressed "To my dear friend, Florence Marryat."* The contents were as follows—the first six lines being *written in ink*, of which there was none in the blotter:

"Usk, August, 1892.

My Dearest: I am trying to write with your pen and this ink, but it is no good. So much power expended in waste, as, I am sorry to say, this woman is so weak, physically (not mentally) that we can see her *head* is in danger. Still, whilst power lasts, don't sell the house." (This was in allusion to one of my houses in Kensington, for which I had had an offer.—F. M.) "I took your pen, but of no use." (Here the communication is continued in pencil.—F. M.) "Florence Corner will be a great agent in working out your future. I will do more before you leave here, but now she is prancing about with those girls, and interferes with me." (Florrie had been playing with her daughters in the garden, that afternoon, when, I supposed, the letter was being written.—F. M.) "She is so powerful, that it is very difficult to keep her to ourselves. Get F—— out of London, and keep his home secret. I have taken your paper, but you shouldn't tie it up with cotton. I shall keep your *lace*, but not your pen. Florence is here, but I want you all to myself now. J. P."

The allusion to F—— I understood perfectly, also to the penholder, which had been thrown into my lap, with the blotting-case, but the *lace* puzzled me. So I looked into my box and found a piece of Honiton lace, which I wore as a *fichu*, missing. Powles had only known me during the first four years of my married life, when I was still wearing my wedding things. The piece of lace he had taken was the only article, in my box, belonging to that time, and which, doubtless, he had seen me wear in the olden days—good lace being immortal. It was gone, however, entirely, there was no doubt of that; so I put away my things and waited for him to bring it back again. The next morning I was in my bedroom, after breakfast, when Mrs. Corner entered the apartment. It was a lovely August morning, with a powerful sun streaming in at the open windows.

"Now, Florrie," I said, "let us see if Powles has brought my *fichu* back again."

We opened the box and examined the articles it contained, but there was no sign of the missing lace. As I turned over the things in the tray, kneeling before it, I exclaimed:

"O, that bothering boy. I hope he is not going to keep it altogether, for it is the last clean one I have."

As I said the words, the lace *fichu* came flying back, apparently, through the open window, and fell upon my upturned face. Florrie and I had regularly "sat" two or three times, now, for materializations, but owing, I think, to her powers having lain fallow for such a length of time, with only partial success, that is, we had not obtained the full form, as theretofore. On the 1st of September, the following letter, from my friend, was found under my pillow, on rising. I discovered it whilst taking my pocket handkerchief from under the pillow:

"MY DEAREST HEART: No doubt you are disappointed with results, but all we do now is only preparing for what will soon take place. I am not infallible, any more than any other man, but I do see that you *must* see F—— *out of Cardiff*. I like the bay" (alluding to a bay colt I had just purchased. Powles was so excellent a horseman and judge of horses, that, in his regiment, he obtained the *soubriquet* of "The Centaur."—F. M.), "but do not work him, only exercise him for a fortnight. Wash the eye with *water only*" (the groom had been using oxide of zinc.—F. M.), "and keep his shoulder washed with *bay salt*. I am sorry for this poor woman, but her troubles in your life will finish this month. You and she will do much. God bless you. J. P."

On September the 4th, I had settled to leave Usk, and visit some friends in Devonshire. The evening previous, as we were seated at dinner, *a hand was placed upon my lap, under the table, and deposited there the following note.* The time was eight o'clock; the gas was lighted; round the table were seated Mr. and Mrs. Corner, their two daughters, and two lady friends, beside myself. The servants were waiting and passing round the table at the time; there was no room for trickery of any sort. My attention was first attracted to what was going on by my dress being gently pulled. I looked down and there was the hand on my lap, a bare hand, looking perfectly natural, holding an envelope out to me. I took it. It contained a half sheet of notepaper, with these words, scribbled in pencil:

"MY DEAR F: I am here, close to you, and will help you with F——. Get him away and all will be well. I will watch over you and see that all is well, J. P. This woman is the one who will do more than all, to confirm your *book* and our *reality*."

Now, this is what I mean by direct-writing. There was no doubt in my mind of the genuineness of these letters, not because I could not account for their being written in any

other way, but because they contained allusions to things *known only to myself*, and this is the only test worth having. I did not visit Mrs. Corner again until last month (April). All through the intervening eighteen months I had received no written communication from Powles, so I conclude he cannot write through any other medium. On the last occasion, Florrie and I sat twice for written communications. We placed the paper and pencils on a table, in the dark, and sat, with our four hands interlaced—she holding both mine, and I both hers—no one else being present but ourselves. The first three communications, written by different spirits, took four minutes to write, the next took three minutes. I transcribe the first just as they were penned :

"*Ne grondez pas, cherie Marie. Je danserai encore moi.*"

* * * * * * * *

"It is useless to kick against the pricks, Florrie. We have you and will keep you, and care for you." (Unsigned.)

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"I know all arrangements, and will give you good results, to-morrow. Do not allow any one to be in this room more than is absolutely necessary throughout the day. Florrie, you can trust yourself with us. Do not fear, we will not allow you to be hurt, and you have good protection round you. C. B. is here, but we do not care for him here at present. Dear Mrs. Ross-Church, did not we say, years ago, that you and Florrie would come together in the end ? My power fails. I. E. B. Go now. * * *

DEAR FLO, as ever. J. P."

Now, it is simply useless for me to assure my readers that I *know* the foregoing letters to be genuine, because I was quite alone with Mrs. Corner, and held her hands the whole time. *They* were not present ; *they* did not hold her

hands: they have to take my word for everything; and, for aught they know, I may lie like a gas-meter. But there are points in them which even a stranger may note as curious. Had they been fabricated, why did I not receive a long letter from Mr. Powles, instead of a few words, written hurriedly, just to tell me he was there, without the power to address me further. The first message is, evidently, sent by "Marie," who was the control who came to Florrie Cook, in place of Katie King, when she had passed on higher. Marie had been a ballet girl in her earth-life, and would dance when she got outside the cabinet, which used to annoy Florrie, because she thought it was so frivolous for a spirit, and that the sitters would object to it. Marie's favorite address to her medium in those days (fourteen years ago, remember) used to be "*ne grondez pas!*" and mark the impudence of the addition, "*je danserai encore moi!*" as though she would say, "I mean to do just as I choose." The message, signed I. E. B., standing for Isabel Elizabeth Blunt, is from one of the best and purest spirits who have ever manifested through Mrs. Corner, but whom she had not heard from, for the same space of time. This accounts for her addressing me as "Mrs. Ross-Church," as that was my name at the time she knew me. It also proves how foolish those people are who imagine spirits to be omniscient and omnipresent, like the Almighty. Isabel had no interest in me, excepting as a friend of her medium. She knew me, as any mortal might have done, by a particular name, and, not having been near me since, did not know that I had changed it. But many people would be inclined to take that fact as a proof that she could not be a spirit, because she did *not* know. The prophecy that Florence Corner and I should come together in the end, and work together for the cause of Spiritualism, *was* pronounced years ago,

and is still insisted on to this day; therefore, I have no doubt but that it will, eventually, be fulfilled. The next morning, just as I was starting for the train, Florrie said to me: "Do come into my little room. I have an idea we shall get something." Accordingly, I went with her, and, having made our preparations, sat, with interlaced hands, as before. I must premise that we had sat, the evening before, for materializations, with a strange gentleman—strange, I mean, to Spiritualism—and he had proved so strong and so harmonious, that the spirits had been delighted with his influence, and, for a first seance, after so long an interval, the sitting had proved most successful, the full form having shown itself almost immediately, though unrecognizable. (It has proved since to have been "Marie.") It is to this seance, I conclude, that I. E. B. alludes in her letter.

"DEAR MRS. ROSS-CHURCH: The old prophecy is fulfilled, and Florrie's fate is fixed. (This means, to my idea, that, although Mrs. Corner has declared, over and over again, that she would have nothing more to do with using her mediumistic powers for the public, she will have to follow the wishes of her controls, and come forward in the cause, whether she likes it or not. Whilst she had no one to sit with, it was impossible; but the spirits contrived to introduce her, through my means, to the family of which the gentleman I spoke of is a member, and through whom, I believe, she will find herself forced into public notice again.—F. M.) There will be much suffering for her; but it is necessary. Mr. B. is the better half of her mediumship. Do not tell her, but let it come gradually. Nothing of *great* importance will take place for the next few months, except his and her development.—I. E. B. For *Flo*, not *Florrie*."

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"MY DARLING FLO: It is hard to see you, and not be able to be close to you, the more so as this girl is so suited to us; but it can't be helped, as the turning-point in her life has come, and, for the

time, we must give way. My dearest, you are always in my heart, and, when your dear voice rings again in my ear, I forget the lapse of years, and think I am, as I always was, your own J. P."

* * * * * * * *

This is, really, such a very private and lover-like letter, that I feel I ought not to give it to the public, except that it is to prove the truth and strength of Spiritualism that my friend writes to me. These two letters, containing, in all, two hundred words (for parts were so private I was obliged to omit them), were written in *three minutes,* by my watch. Taken in conjunction with perfect darkness, I wonder how many mortals could accomplish the same feat.

Bessie Davis and I have obtained a good deal of direct-writing whilst sitting together. One evening, after getting up from a mixed seance, we found a large sheet of paper, covered with what seemed to be unintelligible gibberish. We turned it upside down, and round about, and held it in every sort of light, but could make neither head nor tail of it. At last, it struck Mrs. Davis to hold it against a looking-glass, when it became quite distinguishable. Written in a large, round hand, were these words :

To Dear Florence Marryat: I like your circle, and will help it all I can. I made a sad muddle of my own life, but am free, now, to show others how to be happier than I was.

Yours, M—— K——."

This note was signed, not with initials, but the full name of a lady known to both of us, and living, at the time (as was believed), in New York ; so we thought it must be some other spirit taking her name, to mislead us. In a short time, however, we read of her death in the newspaper, which had occurred on the very afternoon of the

day she wrote to me. "Florence," and, latterly, my dear daughter, Eva, often write me little notes through Mrs. Davis, and, sometimes, pin flowers, such as rosebuds, etc., to the paper they write on. Years ago, when I was in the habit of using Planchette, I received long letters, written in the German character, which is a branch of study which, I regret to say, I never mastered. It used to annoy me at that time, because I seemed to guess the words before Planchette had concluded writing them ; thus, if han were written, I knew directly whether hand, or handkerchief, or handle was going to be transcribed. I thought, therefore, that the writing must be the reaction of my own brain on my fingers, and had determined not to use Planchette any longer. My spirit friends urged me to continue, however, and, from that moment, every word used to be written backwards, so that it was impossible to know what they were, until they were spelled out.

CHAPTER IX.

MY SEANCES WITH CECIL HUSK.

I devote this chapter to an account of the sittings I have enjoyed under the mediumship of Mr. Cecil Husk, of 29 South Grove, Peckham Rye, and I am the more glad to be able to do this, because I believe Mr. Husk to have been much misrepresented and wrongly accused. He has had, like most mediums, to pass under the harrow of ignorance and bigotry, and he has suffered acutely therefrom. But, since the experiences which I am about to relate, have taken place under his auspices during the last two years, I trust my testimony to the undoubted genuineness of what I have witnessed, may have the effect of dispelling the remembrance of anything my readers may have heard against the powers of this remarkable medium. The first time his name was mentioned in my hearing, was as far back as 1882, when I was on a tour with D'Oyley Carte "Patience" Company, in which Miss Angela Husk (his sister) was playing the role of "Lady Angela." As soon as she became aware of my spiritualistic tendencies, she said to me: "O, how I wish you knew my brother Cecil! You must go and have a seance with him, when you go back to London," which I promised to do. Many things, however, intervened to delay the fulfillment of my promise, and it was not till 1892, ten years afterwards, that Mr. Husk's name was again brought prominently before my notice, and I had my first seance with him.

I found him a superior man in many respects. He, like his sister, was a professional singer for some years, until his

failing sight compelled him to give up appearing in public. He is now so blind that, although he can distinguish forms on entering a room, he cannot recognize them until they speak to him. Some of the opposers of Spiritualism were good enough to spread a report that Mr. Husk's blindness was assumed, for the purpose of better hoaxing his clients. Upon this, Baroness Wauchtermeister took him to the elder Crichett, now deceased, who pronounced a cure impossible. I consider Mr. Husk's blindness, however unfortunate for himself, a great factor in his mediumship. Any one who knows how difficult it is to "make up" properly for the stage, even with the advantage of a couple of lights, will understand how utterly impossible it would be for a man to assume a dozen different characters, when shut up in the dark, or even in the light, when he is, unhappily, blind. Yet, Cecil Husk's would-be detractors have insisted that, when in perfect darkness, it is quite easy for him to transform his face, from a young man's to that of an old one, or from a girl's to that of a woman; and to appear in the light, without a smudge on his face or beard, or wig awry. When I hear people argue like that, it makes me sick to think how full the world we live in is of fools, who insist upon condemning things of which they are utterly incompetent of judging. People, sometimes, think me disagreeable, because I refuse to give them introductions to mediums of my acquaintance, or give them their names and addresses. A few months ago, I introduced a gentleman, of whom I entertained the highest opinion, to Mr. Husk, and, so far, my introduction was justified. But this gentleman, in his turn, sent a couple of friends of his to Mr. Husk, who were accepted in the same good faith as he had been. These two men (for I cannot call them gentlemen) were admitted to a seance with Mr. Husk, on the same understanding as their introducer had been, *i. e.*, that they would observe

all the conditions imposed on the sitters by the controls, one of which is, as the merest tyro knows, not to strike a light whilst the manifestations are going on. These men, however (contrary to all the rules of honor and good faith), exhibited an electric light, whilst the spirits were manifesting, and denounced the whole proceedings as fraud, because no spirits were to be seen, and the white drapery, according to their account (and I, for one, could never take the testimony of men who could commit such a breach of trust, without a very large pinch of salt), was all over the table, and Mr. Husk's head and shoulders. Now, had these men been clairvoyant, and able to see in the dark, they would have seen that, when the spirit heads appeared over the surface of the table, they proceeded *out of Mr. Husk's chest, or breast,* and were linked to him. They are partly formed out of his brain, partly from the forces contributed by the sitters. If, when the light was flashed upon them, they had *not* immediately rushed back into the medium, his life would probably have paid the forfeit of the outrage committed on him by these men. As the spirit particles mingled again with the medium's particles, the drapery (which, in dematerialization, always disappears *after* the form) would, naturally, be left on the table, or the medium's body. When the full form dematerializes in sight, and goes down through the floor, the drapery, invariably, is left behind for a few seconds, till it follows suit. I have seen it done over and over again, and know it to be a fact. But this is the way most people go about investigating Spiritualism. They go to discover, not a great truth, but a great fraud, and so they never discover anything, because it is too wonderful for them to grasp all at once, and they do not allow themselves to go any further. If they only injured themselves, however, it would little signify; but the harm is, that they injure the medium. What has been the effect of

the outrage I have related upon Mr. Husk? He had a paralytic stroke after it. When he was waked up from his trance in that sudden way, he was paralyzed with terror, and ran about like a mad creature. The upshot was, he was very ill for some time afterwards, and the doctor, who attended him, can bear testimony to the severe shock he received. For months he has been unable to sit, except with friends, and all because two ignoramuses were dishonorable enough to break faith with him, and think themselves wiser than every one who had pursued the path before them. Is it to be wondered at, after such an experience, if mediums decline to sit with people of whose good faith they are not perfectly assured? It reminds me of Florence Cook, and Mr. Volckman, and the night I and Lady Caithness spent by her bedside, whilst two doctors were in attendance, and the medium in convulsions. But I am not aware if Mr. Volckman ever confessed that he was wrong, in having grasped the spirit form in his arms, and thrown the medium into fits. The men I have been writing of, and the gentleman who introduced them to Cecil Husk, went about declaring they had detected him in trickery, and made many others, doubtless, believe they were correct. Let my testimony weigh against theirs in the scale of evidence. Since I first sat with Mr. Husk, two years ago, I have been a very frequent visitor of his, and under trying circumstances; for, almost every friend to whom I have mentioned his name, has insisted on my being present at the first interview, when one's eyes and ears, as a rule, are all alert to discover the why, and the wherefore, of everything. I have become well acquainted, therefore, with his controls, and their method of working. John King is the principal control of his seance room, and the others are all under his orders.

In 1892, I sat, with about a dozen friends, at twelve

sittings, with Mr. Husk. They were held every Thursday, under very strict conditions, and all the sitters were men and women of education and social position. The seances were cabinet ones, *i. e.*, the medium went into a cabinet formed of a dark curtain drawn across one corner of the room, with a chair placed inside it, and the materializations were all fully formed. As soon as ever Mr. Husk had taken his seat within the cabinet, you would hear the subordinate controls talking together, on all sorts of subjects; but, directly John King arrived, a dead silence ensued. These subordinate controls consist of five men, who call themselves by the names of "Uncle," "Christopher," "Ebenezer," "Tom Hall," and, last, though not least, except in size, my dear old friend, "Joey," who used to manifest through William Eglinton in the olden days, and who followed me to the New World, and showed himself there. These controls are employed in gathering the materials with which John King works, so that there may be no delay when he arrives. As soon as that happens, you may hear him issuing his commands to one and another, such as: "Make those passes more to the right"; or, "Keep his head up"; or, "Two of you raise his shoulders, so as to place him in a more upright position"; and the other spirits' answers: "All right, John"; or, "I've done it, John," etc., etc. To me, it is one of the most curious things, on these occasions, to hear the conversations between the spirits themselves, each one having such a distinctive voice of his own, that, after a short acquaintance with them, it would be as impossible to mistake them as it would be the voices of your different friends. I have questioned John King as particularly as I can, without monopolizing too much of his time, as to the manner in which materialized forms are produced, and his answer was much as follows: "When the controls have collected

the matter with which I work—some from everybody in the circle, but mostly from the medium's brain—I mould with it a plastic mask, somewhat like warm wax in feel, but transparent as gelatine, into the rough likeness of a face. You will understand that there is always a crowd of spirits ready here to show themselves to their friends—a great many more than we can allow to appear. They are built up in their spirit forms, but would be quite invisible to the majority of sitters, unless covered with my transparent mask; without it, also, they would be unable to retain their shape or likeness, when exposed to the outer air. I, therefore, place this plastic substance over the spirit features, and mould it to them. If the spirits will have the patience to stand still, I can, generally, make an excellent likeness of what they were in earth-life, but most of them are in such haste to manifest that they render my task very difficult. That is why, very often, a spirit appears to his friends and they cannot recognize any likeness. He has not given me sufficient time to mould the mask to his features.

"Once, a young man had been out, and his friends had recognized him fully, at which he was so pleased that he returned again and again to show himself to them. All the while, a young woman was waiting her turn, and, when the young man returned to the cabinet, for the last time, she was in such a hurry to follow his example, that she would not stand still for me to mould the mask upon her face, but rushed out with *one-half of the young man's mustache* hanging on her lip, which gave her a very grotesque appearance." There was a gentleman in the company, at the time this story was told, who remembered the circumstances, and confirmed it.

The cabinet seances I am now writing of were quite private, and held amongst friends, so that the forms that

appeared were mostly known to the sitters. The first that appeared, in whom I took any interest, was that of the Duke of Clarence. Not being on the royal visiting list, I had no personal acquaintance with him during his lifetime, and I was puzzled, at first, to think why he should have singled me out to pay the compliment of a visit to. But I had, in common with the rest of the nation, been deeply grieved at the announcement of his death, and, as will be seen hereafter, he seems to have been aware of it. For some time before he appeared, we heard him remonstrating, inside the cabinet, and say: "Leave me alone. Do leave me alone. Can't you see that I'm ill? Let me rest." He, evidently, believed himself to be still lying in his bed at Sandringham. We did not know who was talking after this fashion; but, as soon as the Duke appeared, I recognized him from his photographs. I exclaimed: "Why, it is the Duke of Clarence!" and he replied: "No, not that. Call me 'Eddy.'" I then remembered a story I had heard to the effect that, some few months before his death, he had been to visit a clairvoyant, who had told him, amongst other things, that "Marriage, for him, spelt Death." "So the clairvoyant was right, my poor boy," I said; "and marriage, for you, *did* spell Death." He drew himself up, retreated a few steps, and exclaimed, in a clear voice, so as to be heard by everybody: "No, Miss Marryat, not death —Life! Tell everybody it spelt Life—Life!"

This was the first time of the Duke's appearing; but, after that, he came whenever we sat. Sometimes, he was remarkably like himself; at others, he was not. He, generally, asked me if he looked as he used to do. One day, I told him, he would be just like, according to my opinion, if his complexion were a little fairer. He retired to the cabinet, but returned, a minute later, with a much fairer complexion, but, also, a much shorter face. I laughed,

and said: "O, go away; you are not a bit like yourself now"; at which he smiled, too, and disappeared altogether. Lady G——, who had known the Prince well during his lifetime, was much interested on hearing I had seen him, and called on me, with the express purpose of asking how he looked, and what he had said. "Was he *just* like himself?" was one of the questions she put to me. I hesitated. "Well, not always," I replied. "And I noticed one thing about him, which seemed very unlike. You know how particular he was about his hair. It was always so neatly arranged, with the curl over his forehead. Well, the curl is gone. His hair seems ruffled over his forehead, as if some one had ruffled it with his fingers, on purpose." "You have given me the best possible proof of his identity," said Lady G——; and she then went on tell me that she had been at Sandringham at the time of the Duke's lamented death, and the lock of hair he used to wear had been cut off as a memento, and the remaining hair ruffled over his forehead, just as I described his wearing it. If Lady G——'s account was true (and I have no reason to doubt her word), it was a pretty good proof I had given her, considering I had never seen the Duke of Clarence, except in his published likenesses. Of course, I talked to him, on the many occasions on which I saw him, on various subjects; but, equally, of course, it is hardly possible for me to repeat our conversations here. When I asked him why he came so perseveringly to a humble individual like myself, who has never had anything to do with royalty in her life, he said: "Because you wept for me." "But half the nation wept for you," I replied. "Yes; perhaps so; but you—you are not one who weeps for everybody," which is quite true.

Once, when I accompanied another duke to Mr. Husk's, and Prince Eddy appeared, he at once addressed the new-

comer by his title, and so betrayed the incognito which he had wished to preserve, and of which Mr. Husk had not the least suspicion.

On another occasion, I was invited to join a seance with Mr. Husk, given by several young men in town. I accepted, believing them to be sincere seekers after the truth, instead of a set of scoffers, who merely assembled to make fun out of all they might see or hear. Amongst them, however, was a gentleman who, I was told, was, or had been, a clergyman or tutor at Sandringham, and acquainted with the Duke of Clarence. At any rate, as soon as we sat down, the Duke appeared and went straight up to this gentleman and spoke to him. My sailor son was ashore about this time, and I told him of the foregoing interviews. He asked me why I did not let those who were most deeply interested in the Duke's reappearance know of what I had seen. I laughed, and said: "No, thank you, my boy! I don't want to bring a storm of royal hailstones about my ears." And, in fact, many people are quite affronted if you tell them you have seen their dead. They seem to think it a great impertinence on your part, to have experienced what they have not, and forget that such things are beyond your own control. I did not, therefore, act on my son's suggestion, and the subject was not again raised between us. The next time I visited Mr. Husk, however, and Prince Eddy appeared, he stood just outside the cabinet and beckoned me to go to him. On my approach, he whispered: "Don't tell my people yet, Miss Marryat." I did not remember, at first, to what he was alluding; but when I did, I answered: "O, you are talking of what my son said to me! Well, if you overheard him, you must have also heard me say, that I had no intention of bringing a storm of royal hailstones about my unfortunate ears." "It's not that," he said; "but they are not ready

for this phase of Spiritualism, yet! You say yourself that I am not always recognizable. Sometimes I am like myself and sometimes not, and if they were to see me when I am *not*, it would set them against it altogether. The time will come, but it is not yet." I have never sat with Mr. Husk without this spirit appearing to me, and if, on the news reaching high quarters, I am condemned to be led forth to "hinstant hexecution," I shall say so with my last breath. With him, has often come, but not always, the Prince Imperial, another beautiful, young, treasured life cut lamentably short. Now, with regard to this apparition, I would like to mention what *I* call *proof of identity*. I knew this Prince no more than I did the other, and could only recognize him from his photographs. Any distinguished-looking young man, with an olive complexion, and dark eyes, and slight figure, might have passed for the Prince Imperial with a stranger. But it was *the pure Parisian accent* with which he addressed me, that convinced me of his identity. We were all men and women of education, as I have said before; but, I will venture to affirm, there was not one of us that could speak French as the Prince Imperial spoke it to me. There is no mistaking a pure Parisian accent. It is something that very few Englishmen acquire, even though they may live in Paris; and, on the lips of this spirit, it was undeniable. I have not seen him so often as I have the Duke of Clarence; but, for the first few times, they always came together, or immediately succeeding each other; and the Prince Imperial invariably spoke with the same accent.

As these sittings took place in the dark, I must explain the means by which we saw and recognized the spirits. Mr. Husk has a number of sheets of millboard, painted with luminous paint, and exposed during the daytime; and, as the forms leave the cabinet, they take up two of

these sheets, and hold them, tent-wise, over their heads, by which means they are as fully illuminated for the person they come for as if they were standing under a lamp. The only drawback to this plan is, in my opinion, that only the friends they come for can see the spirits' faces, the little tent completely shielding their features from the rest of the sitters.

We had a curious experience, during these seances, with Captain Fred. Burnaby, who had been an intimate friend of Mr. Douglas M——, one of the sitters. John King had called out from the cabinet, "Here's somebody for you, Mr. Douglas M——;" but no one had any idea who was coming. Presently, out stalked the tall figure of Captain Fred. Burnaby. Every one who knew this gentleman, knows what an enormous chest and pair of shoulders he possessed, and what a very small, melon-shaped head in comparison. Out he came, holding the two illuminated boards up to his face, whilst John King directed him. "To the right, if you please! The gentleman to the right." The spirit walked up to the side of Mr. Douglas M——, and then, with a kind of cry, dropped both the boards and stood in darkness. "My God! M——," he exclaimed, "I never expected to see you," and, thereupon, he rushed back into the cabinet as fast as he could. His tone and exclamation were exactly what one might have expected to hear from a mortal who had suddenly encountered a spirit. Captain Burnaby appeared for his friend several times after that, but his unmistakable fright was a joke amongst us for some time afterwards. Directly after him, came dear, old Frank Buckland, with his thin, gray hair and beard, and a fishing-rod over his shoulder. He, also, came for Mr. Douglas M——, and had a somewhat lengthy conversation with him. I am relating all I can remember of these twelve seances, rolling their experiences into one, as it were, and not staying

to identify which of them I am alluding to, as the same spirits appeared at almost all. It was here that I again met John Powles, the first time since I had been in America, and the first time, at all, in England. John King addressed me from inside the cabinet. "Here's a friend of yours, Florence, who won't put on white drapery. He says he never has worn sheets, and he never will, but must appear in tweed clothes." "Who is he, John?" I asked. But John will never give the name of a spirit. He says if it is too weak to give its own name, or too unlike its earthly self to be recognizable, it had better wait till it has gained more power. So he would not tell me it was Powles. "Why do you want him to put on white drapery?" I next demanded; "what is the good of it?" "It preserves the spirit's borrowed material form longer than anything else," he replied; "I know you mortals fancy that spirits appear in white as a token of their purity, but it is not so. We use white drapery in preference to any color, because we have found, from experience, that it is more serviceable to us. But, as your friend wishes to appear in earthly raiment, he can do so; but he will not be able to stay so long, in consequence." A minute afterwards, the curtain parted, and John Powles stood before me. He was attired (seemingly) in a rough gray, or fawn tweed suit, though John King had thrown a white piece of drapery over his shoulders. He looked exactly like himself, and spoke quite distinctly. I said: "My dear, old boy, how glad I am to see you so like your old self!" and he replied: "Always, my dearest, in life or death." His hair and beard were of the reddish golden color they were in life; his eyes china-blue, and his stature and build just as I remembered them. Every one in the circle saw him as plainly as I did, and heard him speak, and remarked on the tweed suit he wore, the medium having entered the

cabinet in a black suit. Powles has often appeared since, through Mr. Husk. Once, when we were sitting round the table, his face suddenly appeared before me, but, to my surprise, his hair was snow-white. "Why, what's the joke now?" I exclaimed; "what have you done to your hair and beard?" "You always call me a 'boy,'" he replied, "and talk as if you were so much older than myself. So I thought I would show you what I should have been like, had I continued on this earth." In fact, he was several years older than myself, and would have been an old man by this time, in the earth life, and I am glad to think he has gained the Land of Eternal Youth. He, generally, says something sweet to me, as "Dearest of all," or "The dearest friend I have," which is, I daresay, very true now, as most of his own family have died off, and he has their society over there. And I shall look for him amongst the first to welcome me, when I go over.

My daughter Florence was, of course, a standing dish at these seances, and everybody present was anxious to see her, having read her history in "There is no Death." One afternoon (we always sat in the afternoon), I asked her if she could bring one of my babies, and added, to my next neighbor: "I think the materialization of a baby is such a convincing proof of genuineness," in which she acquiesced. Florence said she would try, and, retreating to the cabinet, presently returned, nodding and smiling, in the direction of her left arm, whilst she carried an illuminated millboard in her right hand. I glanced at the left arm. On it reposed a tiny creature, no larger than a penny doll, but, yet, alive, as might be plainly seen by its little arms, which were waving to and fro. I gazed at it in amazement, whilst Florence continued to smile and nod her head. "*That* a baby of mine!" I exclaimed, laughing. "I won't own it. Go away, you fraud, and get me something better."

To my surprise, Florence acquiesced, and, almost immediately, returned with a child of perhaps nine, or ten months old in appearance; a large baby, who could sit upright, which kept turning its head round to see the company, and had blue eyes, and a head of tiny flaxen curls. Florence did not walk round the circle on this occasion, so that all the sitters did not see the two children; but the lady next me did so, distinctly, and expressed as much surprise as I did.

My aunt, Mrs. Bury Palliser, was a woman well known in the world of letters and art. She was my father, Captain Marryat's, favorite sister, and had always proved a good and kind friend to me. One afternoon, John King announced: "A spirit for you, Miss Marryat! I don't know who she is, I never saw her before, but she is some relation of yours, an elderly lady, and she is holding up her right hand. There is blood on it, as if it had been torn. The action is intended for a guide, in case you do not recognize her." But there was no need of a guide; for, as soon as I saw the spirit, I recognized my dear aunt Fanny, with her face so like mine, that people often said I resembled her in feature, far more than any of her own children did. I saw the smear of the blood on her hand, also, but did not understand it, until I had time to think the matter over and remembered what I had been told respecting her last illness. She died of Bright's disease, and her agony, at the last, was so great, that she fixed her teeth in the back of her hand and mutilated the flesh. I had not been present at the time, but was told of this after her death; the circumstance, therefore, did not immediately recur to my mind, so that no one can imagine there was any brain collusion in the case.

Another spirit, whom I saw, for the first time, when sitting at these seances, was my Persian guide. For some

time past, I had been told that my most powerful guide was an ancient Persian, but, by no means, could I get at his name. One afternoon, however, a white-robed figure issued from the cabinet, and "salaamed" before me. I asked who he was, but received no answer, only another profound "salaam," as we should have called it in India. It was a man with a dark complexion, black eyes, and a black beard, all plaited in little tails. He wore a turban, and a long robe, reaching to his feet, and girt round his middle by a white sash of the same material. I asked John King who he was, but all the answer I got was, that he was a most powerful control of mine. Since then, I have seen him several times, and he has given me the name of Abdullah Ben-adad Pen-rudah Mahomet Abdullah, which is a pretty good mouthful if you should happen to be in a hurry. I shall have occasion to mention my Abdullah hereafter.

One very interesting apparition, which took place during these sittings, must not be omitted. There was, at that time, a certain house, in Hammersmith, which had been badly haunted for years past; so badly, indeed, that the mistress of it, a single lady, could not persuade any servant to stay with her during the night, when the haunted spirit, an old man, used to enter her bedroom, and shake her in her bed, exclaiming: "Get out of my house. Get out of my house!" She must have been a plucky old lady, for she used to reply: "It is *my* house, not yours," and go quietly to sleep again. Some of our circle, however, having heard of this spirit, and obtained the permission of the mistress of the house to hold a seance there with Mr. Husk, had assembled, the week before, and interviewed the ghost, who had abused them all roundly, in turn. They had, however, extracted his history, and the reason of the purgatory he was undergoing, from him. He said

that, one hundred and fifty years before that time, he had occupied the house, with his only child, a daughter; that this daughter had been led astray, and that when she became a mother, he was so enraged, that he had put the poor, little baby on the fire and burned it to death, and the sight had so maddened the unfortunate young mother, that she had rushed upstairs and flung herself from the roof of the house, being smashed to pieces on the stones beneath. The Thursday after this sitting had been held in the haunted house, at Hammersmith, John King informed us that this pleasant old gentleman had followed his medium home, and he had great difficulty in preventing his being annoyed by him in the intervening time; that the murderer's spirit was in the cabinet at that moment, and most anxious to manifest itself; but John would not allow him to do so, without the permission of the circle, as he was earth-bound and low, and not likely to do us any good. But, on the other hand, if we consented to interview him, we should be helping him to rise and break the chains that held him to this world. Of course, we all gave a hearty consent; I, for one, being most anxious to see what the old wretch was like. In a few minutes, therefore, he appeared. I do not think I ever saw a viler countenance. I can only compare it to that of a decomposed "Fagin." His eyes were small, and sunken in his head, beneath the most formidable shaggy eyebrows. His nose like an eagle's beak; his lips protruding, sensual, and of a blue tint; his hair, matted and filthy; his nails like claws, and his hands covered with hair. He was either deformed, or crouched, as he walked slowly round the circle, muttering to himself, in a whining voice: "O Lord, how long, how long? Will this torture never end? Why can't I die? Why can't I die?" This was another case, where the spirit was so human, that it could not realize

it had passed out of the body. Most of the circle shrunk from this dreadful spirit with aversion; and, indeed, he looked quite ready to murder some one else. As he neared my side, rubbing his hairy hands together, and muttering to himself, I leaned forward, and said with one of my sweetest smiles: "My friend, don't you know that you have passed over? You are not in the body at present. You died years ago." He turned his lascivious, vicious face towards mine, glared at me for a moment, and then hissed out: "Damn you. I didn't." Which courteous return for my civil piece of information shut me up altogether.

After this spiritual Sir Charles Grandison had left us, his daughter materialized and spoke to us also. She was a pleasant-looking girl of, perhaps, twenty, dressed in the fashion of her time, in a mob cap, and a kerchief pinned across her bosom, her curling, brown hair falling each side of her face. She thanked us for having let her and her father come amongst us. It was the first time, she added, that they had quitted the house at Hammersmith since their crimes had been committed; but she hoped, now, that they would never go there again, but commence to soar upwards. It was a repetition, as far as the freeing of their earthly bonds, through our intervention, was concerned, of the "Story of the Monk," which I give in my former book. I never saw either of them again; but it is an experience that made a deep impression on me.

I had permission to take a young gentleman friend to one of these sittings, it being the first materializing seance he had ever attended. I was aware that this gentleman had three living brothers; but of what babies had died, in his family, I had never been told, and he, himself, had almost forgotten. Soon after we were seated next each other, however, a young man came from the cabinet straight up to my friend, and gazed at him very earnestly.

I asked him if he recognized the spirit as any one belonging to himself, and he answered "No." The spirit came up several times, however, until I instigated my friend to ask if he could give his name, and say what relation (if any) he was to himself. He did so, and the answer was "Brother." "Have you lost any brothers?" I asked, and he nodded in reply, as he demanded of the spirit, "Which brother?" The answer was given, unhesitatingly, "Willy." I then examined the appearance of the spirit and perceived that he possessed the same eyes as my friend; a pair of very large ones, of the darkest blue. After the seance, I expressed my surprise that I had never heard that he had lost a brother, and he said: "Well, that is not surprising, for I had almost forgotten it myself; but the two babies born before me, were boys, and both died as infants, one being called Frederick and the other William, and that is really all I know about it." If Mr. Husk represents these materialized spirits himself, "making-up" (as the sceptic suggested to me), whilst inside the dark cabinet, it is remarkable that he should be able to guess at the names and sexes of dead babies, that even their own relations cannot remember. The young man, who appeared to us, looked about twenty. On my remarking this, my friend said that he would have been two and twenty, had he lived. The spirit answered: "No, four and twenty!" which proved to be correct.

I have spoken only of the forms which appeared, at these sittings, for myself and immediate friends; but almost every one in the circle received satisfactory tests of the presence of their own belongings. Naturally, however, one does not take much notice of the advent of strangers, unless they have made themselves famous, in some way or other. One instance, however, intruded itself on my notice.

The gentleman I have already mentioned as Mr. Douglas M——, had lost a sister, called Mary, who had been the wife of an officer, who had served in India, and whom I will call Captain O——. "Mary," who was a very sweet-looking spirit, appeared several times to Mr. M—— and his wife, and so convinced them both of her identity, that they became anxious that Captain O—— should also see her. Mr. M—— told me that Captain O—— was a great sceptic; but he thought that if he once saw the spirit of his wife, he would believe. For this purpose, he organized a private sitting, to which he should bring Captain O——, the only other sitters being his wife, himself, and me. This plan was carried into execution, and, on the day appointed, we four assembled at Mr. Husk's house. The reason of our meeting there had been made no secret with the medium. He had had plenty of time given him to make his preparations; he had (as the sceptics would say) most successfully imitated the spirit of Mary before; the fact of his doing it again, might have led to great advantages for himself—wherein, then, lay the difficulty of recalling her? Yet, as the event proved, some insuperable obstacle intervened. We had a most successful seance; several friends of the sitters appeared, but no Mary. I must tell you that the fact of Mr. Douglas M—— having spoken with the spirit of his sister had been carefully withheld from Captain O——, as they were anxious to see if he recognized his wife, as readily as they had done. They confidently expected to see her reappear, but the time went on and there was no sign of her. Suddenly, an old Indian tune, which I well remembered to have often heard played on the tom-toms, in the bazaars of Madras, sounded on the little stringed instrument, which lay upon the table, and is called "The Fairy Bells," and I exclaimed: "Why, that is the old bazaar tune." Captain O—— seconded the

assertion, and, immediately, a dark Indian face appeared on the table, and stopped before him. He recognized this face as belonging to an old "kitmaghur" of his, who had lived in his service, for sixteen years, in India, and addressed it in Hindustani, to which it volubly replied. They kept up a conversation for some time, and Captain O—— acknowledged himself to be perfectly satisfied as to the identity of the spirit, with whom he had conversed. Now, there are two points to be observed, for the genuineness of Mr. Husk's manifestations, in this incident. In the first place, since he knew that Mr. M—— was most desirous that his brother in-law should see the spirit of "Mary," and had organized the meeting, expressly, for that purpose, why did not "Mary" appear, and increase his own reputation as a medium? Secondly, since for some reason or other, "Mary" was not forthcoming, and Mr. Husk (presumably) substituted a "made-up" Indian spirit in her stead, how was it that he could converse, fluently, in Hindustani, with his duped client? My object in putting these and similar questions down in black and white, is to make reasoning people exert their faculties to solve them; not to moke fools exclaim: "O, it cannot be true, because *we* have never experienced anything of the sort." Captain O—— was a sceptic. He accompanied his brother and sister-in-law to Mr. Husk's, expecting to be present at some fraud; yet, he saw and talked with an Indian servant, whom he had known for sixteen years, so that he was not likely to be mistaken in his identity; a servant, whom his relations had never seen, and never expected to see. Besides, Hindustani is, perhaps, the most difficult language to master in the world. Very few Indian officers can pass an examination in it, and to be able to speak it like a native, means to be perfect in its use. If Cecil Husk personated that native head, how did he

manage to speak Hindustani, so that an officer, who had lived amongst the natives, detected no error in his speech or pronunciation? It is ridiculous to imagine that he could, any more than he could have pronounced the Parisian French spoken by the Prince Imperial. But "Mary" did not appear during that seance at all, though, I suppose, her white drapery and pigments, for "making-up," etc., were waiting ready for her, on the table in front of the medium.

This was not a cabinet seance, but a table one, *i. e.*, the sitters sat round a table in the dark, holding each other's hands, whilst the spirits' faces and busts, only, appeared before them. This is the usual way in which Mr. Husk sits, as the production of the full form takes double the strength out of him. I have received some most satisfactory manifestations under these conditions.

I will tell you how my dear old mother came to me there; but I must first relate the story of her death, which took place on the 13th of February, 1883. She was a very old lady, and much disapproved of the custom of piling flowers on coffins, which is carried to such an extent nowadays. She had been to see an old friend, lying dead, a short time before her own death, and animadverted strongly on the absurdity of having found her withered corpse, covered with beautiful white flowers, just as if she had been a young girl. "Mind, no flowers!" were almost the last words she repeated, as she was dying, and, in accordance with her wishes, we decided not to put any on her coffin. But, on the day her coffin was closed, I bought a large bunch of deep, purple, sweet-smelling violets, and divided it into five small bouquets, one for each of her daughters, and as I placed them on her breast, I said: "You said 'no flowers,' mother, but you won't mind these violets, just one bunch for each of your daughters." It was an early spring that

year, and the perfume of the violets was so strong, that it filled the room whilst they remained in it. My mother had been very restless and delirious for some days before her death; but, during the last hours, she regained consciousness and recognized us. Seeing me stooping over her, she whispered "Sing, Flo—sing 'Rock of Ages,'" which I, accordingly, did, and very soon afterwards she passed away. I had not seen my mother, nor heard from her, till, one evening, I entered Mr. Husk's seance room, in company with twenty or more strangers, and, as we did so, we all perceived a strong smell of violets, though it was in the month of August, when no violets were blooming. The ladies turned to each other, asking "Have you any violet scent about you?" or "Have you any violet powder about you?" But I said: "This smell comes from no scent or powder. Can't you smell it is the scent of *fresh* violets." But, still, I did not connect it with any idea of my mother. When the sitting had proceeded a little, the "Fairy Bells" played "Rock of Ages." Mrs. Husk, who was present, asked me: "Is that for you, Miss Marryat? I do not remember to have heard that tune played here before." Then the combination of the violets and the hymn brought my mother to my mind, and I said: "I am not sure; but I think I recognize it." At the same moment, *a fresh bunch of violets, wet with dew,* was thrust under my nose, and I had hardly had time to exclaim, with astonishment, at the circumstance, before a hand was laid on my shoulder from behind, and I heard my mother's voice whispering: "Yes, dear, it is I! You were very naughty to put flowers on me when I told you not to do so; but I am glad of it now, for I shall always come to you with my two symbols, the hymn and the violets." It was on that occasion that I asked her: "Are you quite happy, now, mother dear?" and she answered: "Yes! quite happy; but O Flo! it is all *so very*

different from what I imagined." You will see from this, that Mr. Husk grows cleverer and cleverer as these sittings proceed: for he has now not only discovered (what I never told him, nor any one else) that I had put violets in my mother's coffin, against her expressed wishes; but he has learned the secret of producing them fresh, sweet-smelling, and wet with dew, in the middle of August. He "did ought" to make his fortune.

One day, I was sitting, by invitation, with some very hard-headed sceptics, who were investigating Spiritualism purely from a scientific point of view. They were three barristers, and two of them sat either side of Mr. Husk, holding his hands firmly in theirs. Presently, I heard them speculating on the possible identity of a spirit who was before them, but with its back to my end of the table. "It is an American," said one of the gentlemen; "they constantly wear those pointed beards." "Looks to me more like a foreigner," replied the other, "after the style of Francis the First." Presently, the spirit came round to my side of the table. As he caught sight of me, all his features relaxed in a smile, and he said: "Oh! Florence, my dear, I was looking for you. So glad to meet you again, my dear—so glad!" I recognized him at once as my brother-in-law, Lynall Thomas, who passed away the end of 1887. He was almost a naturalized Frenchman, and always wore a small pointed beard and waxed mustache in the French fashion. He was a very handsome man, with delicate aquiline features, not easily imitated, and had a most refined look. You will observe that the strangers sitting with me, who had never met him in this life, described his personal appearance accurately, and I mention these, apparently, trivial things, in order to prove that it is not *my* imagination alone that transforms waxen images, or rag dolls, into the semblances of my lost friends.

Lynall Thomas has come to see me several times since, and I am always glad to welcome his appearance.

Mr. Husk used to hold what he called an open seance, on Sunday evenings, and I have witnessed some affecting meetings, whilst attending them, between the spirits and the utter strangers who happened to sit next to me.

There was a sad case in the newspapers, some few years since, when a whole family was poisoned from eating tinned salmon, and one little boy, called Richard Parker, died from the effects. I was at Mr. Husk's the evening little Richard reappeared to his father, who was my next neighbor at the table. I saw the child's spirit; a little school-boy of about ten or twelve, with close-cropped hair, and I heard him speak to his father of his home, mentioning everybody there by name, enumerating the playthings and books he had left behind, and saying to whom he wished them given, sending his love and kisses to his mother, and asking when she would come to see him there. His father was much affected by the interview; but we had a long conversation afterwards, when he told me many particulars about his little son. I have sat with Mr. Parker several times since. He has another and older son in the spirit world, named George, and, on one occasion, when Mrs. Parker was obliged to go over to Ireland, to see after the sale of some property there, "George" came to his father, and, in my hearing, gave him all the information concerning his wife that he had not had time to receive through the post, even to the sale of the property, and how much it had realized, all of which proved to be correct. I have seen mothers and fathers at these sittings, with the tears pouring down their cheeks as they spoke with their children again.

Some people are very fortunate in getting proofs of spirit-identity quickly; others have to wait some time; but

my belief is, that the only thing needed to ensure ultimate success, is perseverance.

A lady came over from Bruges, with an introduction from my sister, who is resident there, to ask me to put her in the way of seeing some materialized spirits—she didn't care *what* spirits, so long as she could *see* them. On enquiry, I found she was only going to remain in London from Thursday to Monday. I told her it was impossible to investigate Spiritualism in a couple of days; that, if she went to a public seance, she would only be very much disappointed, and I would rather not have anything to do with it. But she begged and prayed me so, to direct her to a reliable medium, that she might, at least, see *something*, that, at last, but very reluctantly, I gave her the address of, and an introduction to, Mr. Husk, and she attended his Sunday meeting; he knowing no more of her than she did of him. The first spirit who appeared that evening, however, was that of a nun, who had been an intimate friend of the lady from Bruges, and died a short time before. "Sister Catherine," I think she called her, and she was followed very quickly by the spirits of her brother and stepson, to both of whom she had been much attached. This good fortune, for which she was as unprepared as I had been, made the lady a Spiritualist at once, but every one cannot expect the same results. I conclude she must have been a medium herself, without knowing it, but I know no more of her than I have told you.

Some other friends—two young ladies—whom I sent to Mr. Husk, had a very curious experience. They, also, were staying in town for a very short time, and had only one evening to spare for their pursuit of Spiritualism. They sat with Mr. Husk, but they did not see the person they had had in their minds when going there. The spirit of a young man, however, came, several times, for the

younger sister, insisting she knew him, though she could not recognize him in the least. These two ladies, therefore, returned home not so well satisfied as the other. The next evening, they had stalls for the Lyceum, to which they were accompanied by an officer—a man who ridiculed all idea of Spiritualism, or ghosts, or anything supernatural. They had been watching the play very attentively; when it was about half through, the eyes of the younger sister were directed towards an empty stage-box, on the opposite side of the theatre, when, to her amazement, she saw, sitting there, alone, with the white covering over his head and shoulders, the same spirit who had come for her so pertinaciously, in the seance room, the evening before. She thought it must be an optical illusion, and rubbed her eyes, to see if she were dreaming; but, still, the apparition remained immovable in the stage-box. The young lady then attracted the attention of her sister to the sight, who saw it as plainly as she did. But now comes the remarkable part of the story. Being unable to believe the evidence of their own senses, the ladies, after a while, asked the unsentimental and unbelieving soldier, who sat between them, to glance in the direction of the stage-box, and tell them what he saw there; and, to their astonishment, he described the spirit just as they saw it—with the white drapery about its form; with large, dark, mournful eyes gazing fixedly at the younger sister. The two sisters might have been deluded into thinking they saw what was not there; but how about the sceptical officer, who had had no preparation for such an event? Truly, there are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

Sometimes, when he feels that he is amongst friends, John King gives the most remarkable tests, at Mr. Husk's seances, of his own power, and that of his medium. I have

often seen him walk out of the cabinet, fully formed, and place one illuminated board above his head and another beneath his bare feet, to show his height, which is considerably over six feet. I have seen him hold a slate, so that both hands were visible, and then let one hand dematerialize, till it was no larger than a doll's, whilst the other remained the normal size. He has very small and beautifully-formed feet, for a man, of which, I think, he is a little vain, for he always seems pleased when people notice the fact. He plays exceedingly well on the Fairy Bells, which is a rough, little instrument, more a child's plaything than anything else, and only strung with wires, without flats or sharps. I cannot imagine how he handles it; for I have tried to produce an accidental on it, without success. One day, as he was floating it in the air, playing meanwhile, he told us he would give us a descriptive scene on it. He premised that once, when he was flying his black flag over the coast of Spain, he ran inshore to a small town, about the time of evening prayer, and, whilst the inhabitants were in church, he sacked the town, and then set fire to it. Upon the alarm being given, the bells, which were ringing to call the people to prayer, were, suddenly, changed into the fire alarm, and clashed out inharmoniously. The effect, he said, was one that he had never forgotten, and he would try to reproduce it for our benefit. I shall not soon forget the execution which followed this description. It was most artistic. You could hear the quiet summer evening, and the church bells chiming, first, and then the attack, the hurry, and rush, and noise; and then the attack, the alarm, the raging fire, and the clashing bells, which turned the peaceful scene into one of fear and carnage. It is impossible to describe the scene, as it would be impossible to imitate it. And, all the while, the Fairy Bells were careering wildly round the ceiling, whilst

they were fingered without one false note. John King will take the Fairy Bells up to the ceiling, as I have described, pass them through it to the room above, where you may hear them playing in a more subdued key; then on to the roof of the house, where they sound as if far away. He has even, in my presence, brought them down again *outside* the window of the seance room, and played them there, before bringing them back into the circle. "Ebenezer" also plays them, but not so skillfully as John King. Mr. Husk's controls will lift the heavy musical box, which is a weight for any man to carry, off the table to another part of the room; wind it up, when required, so vigorously, indeed, that they have broken it more than once, and give all sorts of physical manifestations.

The seance is usually opened by the spirit of Cardinal Newman, who, carrying a cross of fire, goes all round the circle to bless it; and closed by the spirit of an Armenian priest, who recites the Kyrie Eleison in Greek, as a farewell benediction.

These are some few of the wonders which I have witnessed under the mediumship of Cecil Husk, and can bear testimony to, amidst a score of fellow-sitters. These sittings were not held for me alone. They were conducted in a crowd, who can all testify to the good faith of the medium—who have, for the most part, tested him, year after year, and know what they believe. Shall such a man suffer from the allegaticns of men who are too ignorant to understand what is going on, when those who have made Spiritualism the study of their life can bear witness in his favor?

CHAPTER X.

SOME PRIVATE EXPERIENCES.

I have been very amused, lately, by the discovery that Bessie Russell Davis and I are regarded, by some people, as members of a species of Mutual Admiration Society, pledged to support each other's opinions, on the principle of "You scratch me and I'll scratch you." Also, that, because I edited, I wrote the whole, or the greater part, of her book, "The Clairvoyance of Bessie Williams." Both ideas are totally wrong. Bessie and I have been intimate friends for over fifteen years, and it is hardly possible that either of us could write of a pursuit to which our lives have been pretty well devoted without introducing each other's names. We live near together; we meet constantly, and we seldom meet without having a sitting of some sort; therefore, to eliminate the mention of one another, from anything we may write on Spiritualism, would have to be done purposely. As to Bessie's book, the only part I contributed to it was to take down a few notes given by the spirits while the medium was under control, and to write the brief preface introducing the author to the public. When I am asked, at the present moment, who is the best clairvoyante in England, I say, Mrs. Russell Davis, because I do not know of a better; but I can assure my readers that the information is given, not from any hope of emolument for advertising my friend, but purely from a desire to benefit the persons who apply to me for it. Bess and I, however, have many a pleasant time together, when no thought of publicity enters our heads.

January the first, 1893, was Dewdrop's birthday, or so she said. I don't quite know how she makes it out; but she says she has been in the spirit world four hundred years, and yet has only had seventeen birthdays. Anyway, for some weeks before the dawning of 1893, she had promised to come to supper with me on her birthday, and to bring her medium, and Mr. Davis, and the children with her. She also begged to choose the supper, which was to consist of a roast turkey and various other dishes. Accordingly, on the first, they all reached my house about six o'clock in the evening, Bessie being under control from the minute she crossed the threshold. Almost the first thing Dewdrop told me, was that she was so sorry she had not brought her birthday presents to show me, but her "Medie" had forgotten them in the hurry of departure. The "papooses" (as she calls Mab, George and Alona) had bought for her, with their own money, some colored glass bangles, from the Crystal Palace, and she had fully intended to wear them at her birthday feast. But they had been left behind; so she had to console herself with telling me how pretty they were.

Nothing particular happened until supper was announced, when Dewdrop and Ned were in full force. Dewdrop said she wanted to do something "very good, indeed"—something that "Flo" might be able to tell people of. She asked us to advise her as to what it should be. Mr. Davis and I and the elder children suggested various "doughty deeds," none of which seemed to meet with her approval; until Alona, the baby, called out: "Why don't you go to Norwood and fetch your bangles, Dewdrop?" "But where is 'em?" asked Dewdrop, dubiously. "*I* know," answered Alona. "In mother's work-basket, in her room." "I'll fetch them," cried Dewdrop; "you just lower the gas a little, Flo, and keep quiet, and

don't mind if Medie looks a bit bad, and I'll be back directly." We did as she told us; and, in about the space of five minutes, we heard the jingling of the glass bangles, as they were clinked against each other, close to the ceiling. "Turn up the gas," said Dewdrop; and, as we did so, we saw Bessie was asleep, with her hands folded on her breast, and three bangles on either wrist. When we congratulated Dewdrop on her success, she replied: "I should have brought them over sooner, but that little warmint, 'Lona, told me they was in the Medie's work-basket, and they was on the drawing-room mantelpiece, instead. But here they is, for all that, and aint they pretty?" Dewdrop did not let her "Medie" off, even after this feat, but kept her under control all supper-time.

The dining-table not being large enough for the purpose, the meal had been laid upon two tables set close together, but with separate cloths. Towards the close of it, a gentleman friend of mine made his appearance, and took a seat at the head of the second table. As soon as he was settled, and had a plate of turkey before him, Dewdrop whispered to me: "What shall I do for Bertie? Shall I go back to Norwood and fetch something else from Medie's house?" I opposed this idea, saying I was afraid it would try Bessie's strength too much, and suggested she should do something easier. "Very well" replied Dewdrop; and, the next moment, the two tables were rolled away from one another, so that my friend, who sat at the head of one, found himself pushed against the window of the room; whilst Bessie, who occupied the seat opposite to him, was sent with her back against the sideboard, leaving a hiatus in the center, where the children and Mr. Davis and I sat watching the departure of the remainder of our supper.

On one occasion, Bessie and I were going to a ball together, and stayed at a certain hotel for the night. As we

sat at dinner, side by side, sundry knocks began to be heard under the table, at which our neighbors looked rather surprised; but we, purposely, took no notice of them. This made Dewdrop determined (I suppose) that we should recognize her antics; so, as I lifted a glass of water to my lips, it was suddenly chucked out of my hands, and spilt over the cloth, whilst I had to bear the onus of being clumsy and awkward. As we were dressing for the ball, we remonstrated with Dewdrop on her conduct, but she was incorrigible, and said she meant to do much worse than that. She was delighted with the music and the dancing, and, as Bessie and I sat, side by side, in the ball-room, the former could see Dewdrop and Ned taking part in all the fun. Dewdrop was dressed in her Sioux costume of paint and feathers, with embroidered moccasins on her feet, and Ned was in a sort of Foresters', or Robin Hood, dress of green, and both were taking, apparently, the greatest delight in the dancing. Presently, the Barn Dance was announced, and Dewdrop returned and whispered to me: "Now, I'm going to show you what I can do. You see those two girls in blue and white? I'll make them kick so high that every one in the room shall look at them." I told Bessie what she had said, and we watched the upshot closely. The two girls, beside whom Bessie could see Dewdrop prancing, became more and more excited as the dance proceeded, till I really thought they would be called to order by the stewards of the ceremonies. They kicked higher and higher, till they might have been matriculating for the music halls, whilst wicked little Dewdrop kicked beside them. Their faces grew redder and redder; their hair became disordered; and, at last, their chaperons thought it time to interfere, and the Barn Dance was ended. Dewdrop was immediately by my side again, delighted with her success. "There! did you

see them? Didn't they kick till they could kick no higher? But, if they had seen it done on the stage, they would have put their fans before their faces, and said: 'How improper!'" Dewdrop has a keen sense of the humbug of this world.

When we returned to the hotel, there was a second supper spread for us, to which, perhaps, a dozen people sat down. It consisted of light things, such as sandwiches, cakes, jellies, etc. We had scarcely taken our seats, when everything on the table, jellies, sandwiches, and the rest, commenced bobbing, and jumping up and down in their dishes, to the amazement of the uninitiated. As for Bessie and myself, the bobbing and jumping, and the looks of astonishment, were, altogether, too much for us, and I laughed till I cried; but the more I laughed the more the jellies danced, till I thought I should have gone into hysterics. This was Dewdrop all over. She is always playing some mischievous prank or other, though she can be as solemn as a judge, when necessary.

I knew from Bessie's former experiences, that she must possess materializing powers, but never thought that her guides would let her sit for materialization, or that she had the requisite strength for it. She had often remarked to me, however, that, when we sat together, in the dark, for clairvoyance, she could see my figure enveloped in an orange cloud; and added that I must, necessarily, possess physical power, orange being the tint for materializing aura.

Shortly after, we were desired by Dewdrop to sit in private for materialization—Bess, Bob (Mr. Davis) and I. She promised that, if we would persevere, *and admit no one to our seances, till she gave us leave,* we should obtain great results, and I am sure she would have fulfilled her word.

The first evening we three assembled in Bessie's drawing-

room, we had not the faintest idea that we should get anything. We put out the light, as desired, and sat round a small table, but without joining hands, having previously placed paper and pencils on it. In a few minutes, Bessie went under control, which we ascertained by getting no answer when we addressed her. The next thing we heard was the advance of a chair, from the other side of the room. "Bob," I said, "hold my hand. I feel creepy." The next minute the chair had reached the side of his, and a form, sitting in it, laid its head upon his shoulder. In answer to his questions, he found this was the spirit (though not fully materialized) of his guide, Alona, after whom his little girl was named. I have not mentioned that the room was a very small one, and the door had been carefully locked, as we were sitting under test conditions, not knowing what great results might not ensue from our modest beginning. Bessie is inordinately fond of flowers. and cultivates a garden, in boxes, on the leads of her house, which were two stories above where we were sitting. The next thing which happened was the placing of several chrysanthemums—we found, afterwards, that they were nine in number—on my lap, by Florence. "O, Florence," I exclaimed, "where did you get these flowers? I hope they are not Medie's white chrysanthemums," for I knew how Bessie prized her seedlings. "Yes, they are," replied Florence; "all white ones, beauties." "But Medie will be so vexed to lose them." "O, no; she mustn't be. How can we show our power, if we are not to bring anything into the room?" "Well, don't pick any more, will you?" "No, we'll try something else." In the next room, which was the dining-room, the three children were sitting, amusing themselves with their toys, and on the mantelpiece were two heavy bronze vases. In another minute, these two vases were placed on the table in front of us.

though the next room was gas-lit, and the children knew nothing of their removal. Then we heard the direct voice of Julius Cæsar, the negro who followed me home from Boston, and attached himself to Bessie. The readers of "There is no Death" may remember that, in writing of the mediumship of Mrs. Eva Hatch, I mention seeing the materialized spirits of a negro and negress, and kissing the latter. The former was Julius Cæsar, who, now, constantly manifests to us. He is a very strong spirit, and his voice is loud and distinct. It sounded as if he were standing just behind the medium. Then another direct voice, but quite from the opposite side of the room, spoke to us as follows: "I am the spirit of Mesmer. I have taken the charge of this circle, and I shall not leave it, until the spirit form walks out in the full light, and takes a seat beside the human form." After the sitting broke up, I found a little note on the table, written by Florence, for me, and to the paper of which was pinned a pink rosebud, though we were unable to trace where it had come from. The note was as follows: "Dearest, we are all here, ready to assist in your seances; and everything will come to pass as Dewdrop has prophesied, only you must attend to all she says. Good night."

This was such a fine beginning, that we anticipated grand results; indeed, we could not see what the culmination of such forces might *not* lead to—Bess, Bob and I, not only being mediumistic, but all in sympathy with each other. But, I regret to say, our anticipations have not been fulfilled. Bessie's engagements are so numerous, that they leave her too much exhausted for private investigation; added to which, she did not obey Dewdrop's orders, but invited strangers to witness her materializing mediumship before it was ready for inspection, so that she lost force instead of gaining it, and, though we often sit

together, it is done irregularly, and is liable to many interruptions. It seems as though the two phases of mediumship, clairvoyance and materialization, cannot exist together, or, rather, that one of the two must lose in consequence, and the clairvoyance is the higher power. Were Bessie to give herself up to physical manifestations, she would get wonders, but the question is, if her strength would stand it.

On another occasion that we three sat together, we had the materialized forms walking round the room, kissing us, and touching us; my daughter, Eva, especially, giving evidence of her presence in a very striking manner. She was noted, during earth-life, for the length and thickness of her hair, which fell far below her waist, and on each occasion that she has manifested, besides speaking in the direct voice, she has thrown her masses of hair all over Bob's face and mine, so that we could take it up, in a bunch, in our hands, and feel its texture. That she had begun to manifest so freely, was my deepest source of regret, in having to give up these sittings.

Whilst other manifestations were going on, Julius Cæsar would show his power, by opening the doors of the cabinet and scattering its contents, in the shape of letters, newspapers, etc., all over the floor.

One evening, when Bessie had admitted a young man, of my accquaintance, to these sittings—a man weighing eleven stone, who was seated on a chair near the mantelpiece—Julius lifted him up, chair and all, until one of the legs rested on the mantelpiece, and then let him down, with such a run, that he broke the two front legs off, a circumstance which Bessie did not, at all, approve of, when she came out of her trance.

Another time, when we were sitting round the table with friends, amongst which were gentlemen, and Bessie was in a

normal condition, she had put on a pair of easy old boots, which were very comfortable, but all trodden down at heel and out of shape, and such as she would never have displayed for the benefit of the public, being a natty little woman, and proud of her feet and hands. She felt nothing during the seance, but after it was over, and the gas was relighted, there appeared two curious objects in the middle of the table. "What *is* that?" exclaimed more than one of the party, as they all pressed forward eagerly to solve the mystery; when, to poor Bessie's horror, what should it prove to be, but her pair of old boots, which Julius had contrived to slip off her feet, without unlacing them, or giving her the slightest hint of what he was doing. Didn't she roast him for it, that's all!

Once, when sitting at table—a large dining-room table this time—in company with my cousin, Colonel Fitzroy Marryat, a terrific sound came over the boards, exactly like that of a horse galloping away. The hoofs positively thundered over the table. We all looked at each other in astonishment, for this seance took place in the light, and asked: "What can it be?" Bessie put the questions: Who was there, and for whom did he come? The answer was: "My name is James Carey, I come for Colonel Marryat." James Carey, it may be remembered, was the name of the poltroon who galloped away, and left the poor young Prince Imperial to meet his cruel death alone, and, on enquiry, we found that Colonel Marryat had a slight acquaintance with him, though I forget whether he was aware that he was dead. He utterly declined to have anything to say to him, however, whether dead or alive—indeed, every one there shrunk with loathing from the idea of contiguity with such a specimen of British pluck and valor. But the ring of the horse's hoofs over the table was not to be mistaken.

In the autumn of 1892, I had a young lady staying with me, to whom I am deeply attached. One Sunday evening, she told me it was her greatest desire to attend a seance, never having sat at one in her life. I proposed at once that we should pay Bessie a visit and join her Sunday evening sitting, which she holds sacred, as a rule, to her children; but, being a sort of privileged nuisance on the premises, I ventured to intrude upon her family gathering. I wouldn't advise any of my readers, however, to follow my example. We found her at home, as usual, and I introduced my young friend to her. We had hardly settled ourselves down to the table, before my daughter Florence manifested, and, going up to my friend Emmie, kissed her, and said: "I am so glad you are going to marry my brother, and be my sister. You will make him very happy, and you will be very happy yourself. God bless you." This was all high Dutch to me, not a word having been breathed by Emmie herself on the subject, and my son being then at sea. I glanced across the table, with elevated eyebrows, and asked: "Is it so?" and received an answer in the affirmative. Afterwards, I was told that the news of the engagement had only been withheld from me, until my son should return from sea and tell me himself, but the spirits had anticipated him. It is impossible to hide anything from them. They know it before you do, yourself.

Several of my acquaintances have had their eyes considerably opened by Bessie's controls. It is so difficult to convince them beforehand, that they will be turned inside out, like an old glove, as soon as they deliver themselves up to their tender mercies. It is useless for me to say, when they urge me to accompany them to an interview with Bessie: "You had much better go alone. Unless your past life is like a sheet of white paper (and very few lives are), you will not thank me for accompanying you to Mrs.

Russell Davis. I warn you that she will see through you, as if you were a pane of glass, and she will call 'a spade a spade' when she talks to you." They are always so certain that their past lives are white, unwritten pages, or rather, they do not believe what I tell them, and, in many instances, the results have been ludicrous.

One lady insisted upon my going with her, to her first interview with Mrs. Russell Davis. When I urged the unwritten page theory upon her, she replied: "I only want to consult her about some plans my husband has in his mind. I have some questions I want answered. How shall I set about it?" "Write the questions, or rather, let your husband write them," I said, "on a sheet of paper, and seal it up in a blank envelope, and when you see Mrs. Davis, don't tell her anything about your husband or yourself, nor give her the least hint of what you want, but just place the envelope in her hands and she will answer the questions to the best of her ability." The lady commenced to inform me that her husband had been unfortunate in business, but had an opening for something else, etc. "Please don't tell me any more," I said, "or you will think there is collusion between my friend and myself," and, at last, she was silent. On the appointed day, I met her at Mrs. Russell Davis' house, and, after having conversed on ordinary topics for awhile, we proceeded to business. The lady held a handbag, and out of it, she now drew an envelope portentously sealed with three seals, which, I naturally concluded, contained the questions relating to her husband, which, she had told me, she was so desirous of having answered. Bessie took the envelope and held it against her forehead for a few seconds, and then asked: "What is it you particularly wish me to tell you about the person of whom these questions are put? Is it his examination you are anxious about, or his health, or his feelings towards your-

self?" "I should like to hear everything you can tell me," replied the lady, growing rather red. "Well! he won't pass his examination this time, at any rate," replied Bessie. "He has been too easy-going about it—too self-confident—he thinks too much of his abilities, and does not exert himself sufficiently. It is the story of the hare and the tortoise over again. He has plenty of ability, but he is very indolent, and whilst the hare has been sleeping, he will find that several tortoises have overtaken him." "But will he pass eventually?" demanded the lady. "Why are you so anxious to ascertain? Do you imagine this man is going to stick to you? He is not your husband, you know; he is (or he calls himself) your lover, but he will only care for you, so long as he can get any good out of you. He is not worth thinking twice about, and the sooner you get rid of him, the better." The lady looked rather uncomfortable, and I could not resist whispering to her: "So, this is the white, unwritten page!" Whereupon, she produced a second envelope from her bag, and, handing it over to Bessie, said: "What do you make of this?" Mrs. Davis went through the same formula as before, and replied: "I find there are four questions written here: 'I am offered new employment, shall I accept it?' 'Is the man I am dealing with trustworthy?' 'Should I do better in Australia, than in England?' and 'What is my ill-health due to?' The new employment has something to do with the management of a brewery, and the writer had better not have anything to do with it. He is not fit for management. He is not sufficiently a man of business. The person he is dealing with is honest enough, but the venture would not be a success. Now, as for Australia, he should go there at once, if he gets a good opening. He cannot manage a brewery, but he can brew good beer, and if he went to Australia and opened a brewery for good English ale, he would make his

fortune. What is the matter with him? Well! that is easily answered. *You* are the matter with him! His nerves are all shattered. You are too much for him in every respect, mentally and physically, and the sooner you are separated, the better for him." Now, this lady was a perfect stranger to me before I took her to see Bessie, but she told us, afterwards, that every word the medium had spoken (and there was a great deal of private matter which I have omitted here, as of no interest to the reader), was essentially true. And this is but one instance out of a hundred.

I have heard Bessie say things that have sent respectable (?) wives and mothers flying out of the room, in horror at hearing their secret errors shown up to the light of day; her controls are as honest as herself, and never wink at wrong-doing and deceit. In fact, you *cannot* deceive her—white lies, or fibs, or whatever you may choose to call them, are thrown away on her, for she knows you are lying, directly you open your mouth. She has told me that her wonderful gift of clairvoyance makes her very sad, sometimes, as she passes through the world, and sees the shams and wicked deceptions that are carried on—men, with full faith in women, who are rotten to the core, and *vice versa*—and members of both sexes, apparently, in good health and anticipating long lives, when she sees that a few months will end them.

It so happens that, though Bessie and I have been acquainted for so many years, she never met my daughter Eva, who was the first wife of Victor Stevens, the actor and composer. My daughter was so much away in the provinces, with her husband, after her marriage, that she never knew Bessie till after her own death. At that time the Russell Davis' were living down at a place, in the country, near Hendon, called Grays. As soon as Bessie heard of the dreadful distress I was in, on losing my be-

loved girl, who died in childbirth, at my house in London, she begged me to go and stay with them, for change, and as soon as it was possible, about a month afterwards, I did so. Bessie was then expecting the advent of her youngest child, Aĩona, in a few weeks, and before I had been in the house three days, her controls sent me home again. They said that the spirit of my daughter was so close to me that, if I remained, Bessie might suffer in her coming trial, as Eva did, from blood poisoning, which (as everybody knows) is most contagious, especially for women in the same condition. My whole system had been much shattered at that time, and I was nervous to a degree ; and I can remember how I used to lie awake, at night, and listen to Bessie, in the next room, the door of which, I insisted, should be left open between us, talking to Eva, and begging her to say what she wanted, or what she could do for her. At last, the strain was making us both so ill, that the spirits insisted on my leaving Grays. Bessie often saw my dear girl before I did, and I was always most curious to learn how she looked, and all about her.

One afternoon, in the autumn of 1892, Victor Stevens brought his burlesque, "Bonnie Boy Blue," to the Crystal Palace, and Bessie and I went to see it, together. As it was proceeding, she told me that Eva, Florence and Dewdrop were mingling with the throng before us ; Dewdrop, as usual, joining in all the dances, Florence wandering about the stage, dressed in white, and Eva leaning against a portion of the scenery, watching the whole business most attentively. I thought this very strange, for my daughter had never played in burlesque herself. She had been of great assistance to her husband, though, in all his business, keeping his accounts, designing the dresses and superintending their manufacture, and generally doing all that a highly educated woman could do, to forward his

interests. "But what can Eva have to do here?" I asked Bessie; "I should have thought this was the last place she would care to come to." "She has her husband's interests, still, to look after, and, for her children's sakes, she is most anxious that everything he does should succeed. She watches for the direction in which success lies as eagerly as she ever did whilst on earth, and she influences him with new ideas, and makes him see where things are likely to go wrong." "Tell me what she looks like," I urged; for I would give the world to be able to see clairvoyantly, as Bessie does. "Does she seem sad, or gay; and how is she dressed?" "She looks serious," answered Bessie, "but not sad; her hair is unbound, and hangs, almost, to her knees; and she is dressed in a brown cloth, or tweed gown, with squares upon it of a lighter shade. The bodice is cut slant-wise across the front, and buttoned with large, brown, wooden buttons. She looks very different from Florence, who is dressed in some clear, soft, white material." "Why should Eva not be clothed in white, also?" I put this question as a test: "Well, I imagine," said Bessie, "that Eva is simply clothed with the thought of the sort of dress she wore, whilst occupied in the same business in earth life. Did she ever possess a gown like the one I have described?" Now, the fact is, that the brown tweed dress, with the large buttons across the front, was one of the very last dresses my poor girl wore in this life, and I had recognized the description of it as soon as Bessie mentioned it. The forecasts that come to her, intuitively, and whilst in a normal condition, are often the most remarkable which she makes. She always says that, if she cannot "see" for a person, at the first glance, she never likes to trust her prophecies for him afterwards. And I affirm that, in her normal condition, she is a more reliable prophet than any of her controls.

As she was sitting at my table, one day, she fixed her eyes on a gentleman sitting opposite her, and exclaimed, without any preamble : "That young man will make a name for himself, but not in his present profession. He will leave that, and write ; yes, I see it plainly now—he will make his name in dramatic literature."

This prophecy set all present, including the gentleman himself, laughing heartily, for he was on the stage, and had never, even, dreamed that he could use his pen. Two years after, however, Bessie's prophecy came true, in so far that he found he could write, and, since that time, he has done so well that there is every probability that the second part of it will come true, and he will abandon the stage for a higher walk in art.

I am, as most of my acquaintances know, a great dog lover, even "Ouida," herself, being unable to give me points in this particular ; I am, also, the owner of some valuable bulldogs, from which I have been anxious to breed. To breed bulldogs successfully, however, is an art in itself, and one which few men have been able to master. For one bull puppy that lives, nine die ; and for one that turns out worth anything, fifty are good for nothing. I had, therefore, experienced many disappointments, and was beginning to despair, if I should ever rear a bulldog that would repay the trouble and anxiety. "Ned" knew of my failures, of course, and duly sympathized with them, and, whilst on a visit, with his medium, to some friends of hers in Ireland, he wrote me word that he had seen the very dog for me, and, if I consented, he would buy it. Knowing the exorbitant price good bulldogs fetch, I was dubious of giving Master Ned *carte-blanche* in the matter ; but he was resolute that I must have that particular dog, so I left it all to him. This was "Killiney Shamrock," an animal well known in his own country, where he had won

each time he had been shown. He was bred by Mr. Howard Waterhouse, of Killiney, with whom he was a great favorite. Now, Bessie has an unconquerable fear of my bulldogs (indeed of everybody's bulldogs), and they always have to be shut away when she pays me a visit. The first time she saw "Killiney Shamrock," in Ireland, following his master, and coming towards the house, she flew inside the hall door, and slammed it after her, sooner than encounter him. Presumably, Ned undid the door again, however; for, the next time she came to herself, she was seated on the floor of the hall, with "Killiney Shamrock's" huge jaw, well opened, in her hand, as Ned had been examining his mouth and teeth. She told me she was nearly frightened into a fit. Next thing was that Ned said to Mr. Waterhouse: "Look here, Mr. Waterhouse, I want that dog of your'n, Shamrock." "What do you want him for?" enquired Mr. Waterhouse, who is well used to the vagaries of Bessie's controls. "You know your medium wouldn't have him in her house. She is too much frightened of him." "I don't want him for my *medium*," replied Ned, with a certain air of contempt for Bessie's non-doggy qualities; "I want him for a pal o' mine up London way, Florence Marryat, and I mean to have him." Mr. Waterhouse objected at first, for he had refused a large sum for the dog, but Ned's entreaties prevailed; and, since he knew Shamrock was coming to a good home, he consented to part with him for a (comparatively speaking) small sum. He said, afterwards, that he was sure that, had he refused, Ned would have "spirited" the animal away somehow, so he thought it better to give in with a good grace. Ned was positive that Shamrock would turn the luck of my kennels, and I believe he is right, since he has, already, sired fifteen pups, from two mothers, and won honors at each show at which he has been exhibited. He is, also, a

perfect-mannered dog, with a sweet temper, and most affectionate disposition, and is, I need not add, a great favorite.

People often ask: What good does Spiritualism do? I have found it of infinite good to myself, putting aside all its higher uses of convincing one of the reality of another life. My spirit friends are always ready to help and advise me in mundane matters, even as mundane as bulldogs; and, in any difficulty, I should take their advice in preference to that of any mortal. Not that I consider them *infallible,* by any manner of means, but, as Florence once said to me, when I called her my good angel: "Not an angel, mother; but your little star, that goes before you to light the way. I can see a little farther than you can, but only *a very little.*"

Whilst I am speaking of the uses of clairvoyance, I would like to mention the name of Mrs. Wilkins, of 368 Portobello Road, London, W. So many correspondents have written to me for the address of Mr. Towns, who passed to the higher life, two years ago, that they may be glad to hear of Mrs. Wilkins, who, with some sitters, has given wonderful proofs of her power. I repeat, with *some sitters;* for it seems difficult to convince beginners that clairvoyants are not equally successful with all. Mrs. Wilkins is the wife of a tradesman. She has no opportunity of mixing with the upper classes, nor of finding out their secrets; and, if her clairvoyance were all guesswork, she would surely find something pleasanter to say, or to foretell, and not run the risk of offending her clients. One of the best proofs of the genuineness of clairvoyance is the outspokenness with which men and women, of a class inferior to our own, scourge our pleasant vices to our faces.

A very young married couple once asked me to accompany them to Mrs. Wilkins'. Neither of them were believers in Spiritualism, the young woman being especially

disposed to ridicule the whole affair. Mrs. Wilkins did not seem to have much to say to them while in a normal condition; but, as soon as she passed under control, she asked if they had any questions to put to her. The girl immediately said: "Tell me if I shall ever be married?" and, to the surprise of us all, the answer was "No." The husband, struck by the reply, asked, in his turn: "Shall I?" "Yes," said the clairvoyant, decidedly; "but not just yet. You will marry when you are some years older, and you will marry a good woman, who will make you happy. It will be a true marriage, body and soul." The wife, who had been glancing at me the while, as if she would say: "So *this* is your fine clairvoyant," now put in her oar, thinking to quash the whole proceeding. "Well, we *are* married; so there!" she said to Mrs. Wilkins. This announcement did not appear to disturb the spirit who had been speaking, in the least. She did not even change countenance, as she replied: "O, you mean you have been to church together. Yes, I know; but *that* does not constitute marriage. There is no silver cord of love from your heart to his. Many a couple, who come to consult me, and who have never been tied by a parson, are much more married, in the eyes of God, than you are." The young wife was somewhat offended by this declaration, and said, as we walked home, that she supposed Mrs. Wilkins meant that she was to die, as she prophesied that her husband would marry some one else. The upshot, however, is that, at the present moment, four years afterwards, *he* has left the country, and *she* is in the Divorce Court.

Another acquaintance, an unmarried lady this time, accompanied me to Mrs. Wilkins, on a similar errand. She was an only child of wealthy parents, and dressed in the height of the fashion. She was completely unknown to the

clairvoyant, to whom I did not even mention her name. Yet, as soon as Mrs. Wilkins passed under control, she said to her: "You are the only child of your mother, and heiress to her money and that of her husband. But you are not the child of your mother's husband; you are the child of her cousin." Now, I am not advocating the pleasantness, or the advisability, of receiving such a piece of information, when it is too late to remedy the evil (though, if people go of their own free will to visit clairvoyants, they must expect to hear the truth, however bitter); but I quote the incident, that my readers may decide for themselves, if it is probable that a woman of Mrs. Wilkins' standing would make such a terrible insinuation to a lady of birth and position, if she were not *impelled* to do it, by a force superior to her own. Whether the communication was true is not the question at issue here. It is whether any one would *dare* make such an assertion, on no authority but that of imagination. Why, *I*, who know these people, and who am supposed to be acquainted with as much of their business as the public will ever know, would not presume to guess at such dark secrets, as I have heard revealed by clairvoyants in the lowest positions of life. Put yourself in the place of, let us say, for the sake of argument, a woman like Mrs. Wilkins—always presuming she is a cheat—and think if you would dare, even if you were full of suspicion, to accuse your most intimate friends of adultery, and coldness, and deceit, to their faces. And how should a stranger, who has never seen them before, and who *injures herself by losing their custom* (for therein lies the gist of the matter), risk her own reputation for truth and reliability, by inventing a scandalous falsehood, which could only anger them to hear, and bring her to shame?

A married lady once called to see Mrs. Russell Davis,

accompanied by a young man. Bessie intimated to her, that she made it a practice never to sit for more than one person at a time, as she could not be responsible for what her controls might say. The lady, however, begged that her friend might be admitted to the seance, as he knew everything about her that could, possibly, be told. She was, therefore, allowed to have her way. Passing under control, Bessie said: "There is a young man standing behind your chair who was in such and such a profession, who lost his life in such and such a way (I am purposely telling this story in an ambiguous fashion, lest the actors in it should be recognized), and at such and such a place. You have had two sons, one is on the earth plane, and the other in the spirit-world. The young man I have described to you is the father of your spirit-child. He is holding it in his arms now, and he desires me to tell you, that he is thankful that both he and his child have passed out of your life, and will trouble you no more. Your other son is still living. The gentleman sitting beside you is the father of that child." Now, here again, is a communication which Bessie could never have made on her own authority, even had she been aware of it. One would imagine that the recipient of such a startling piece of news, would have run out of the house with horror and never appeared there again; but, on the contrary, the best proof that can be brought forward of the truth of her communications is, that Bessie's clients go to her again and again, and, in many instances, become her warmest friends. They see her controlling spirits, know all about them; but, at the same time, they are convinced it is the *spirit,* and not the *clairvoyant,* who has turned them inside out.

I mentioned, in my former work on this subject, that my father, Captain Marryat, had never appeared to me, and said he never should, and that, in the course of my experi-

ences, I had never received a message from him, even, but twice, and each time it concerned my son, Francis Frederick Marryat, and not myself. I have one more instance of my father communicating with me to record now, and that was also organized for the benefit of my son rather than myself. My father has always expressed a great interest in the career of my eldest son, who is a sailor, and was named after him and my two brothers, both of whom died in the prime of manhood. This son married last year, and, in December, a little boy was born to him. The father was at sea at the time of the baby's birth, and the mother had decided to call it "Francis," after her husband. Shortly after, Dewdrop brought me a message from my father, to say he was disappointed, because the child was not to be called Frederick, after himself, and that, if possible, he should like it to be so. I communicated his wishes to my daughter-in-law, and she altered her baby's name to Frederick. Then my father sent me word that, if Emmie would bring the baby to my house to meet Bessie, he would baptize it himself. This programme was carried out, and though, to outsiders, my assertion may be difficult of belief, the ceremony was a most impressive one. When Captain Marryat commenced to speak through Bessie—you forget that she was a little, fragile woman of five feet nothing —her voice became sonorous, deep and rich; her manner almost solemn; her attitude, stately and dignified. All my late father's determination of manner, and depth of knowledge and breadth of understanding were there—it was not a simple, little woman speaking to you; it was an earnest, deep-thinking, eloquent man—with all the asperities of this life softened down by a long residence in the spirit world. The baby, who, like most healthy youngsters, is a regular squawler, appeared almost awe-struck as my father took him in his arms, and gazed upwards in his face, as he was

speaking, in complete silence. The address given was, as every one present agreed, most beautifully worded and delivered. He spoke of the boy's future and his hope that he might make the old name famous in his generation. He named him "Frederick Ernest Marryat" for this world, and "Hope" for the world to come, because he foresaw, he said, that the child would be the hope of both families, of which (if he lives) he will be the head. Other spirits succeeded my father—Florence, Dewdrop and Goodness—and they all made speeches, or prayed for the baby. Altogether, it was a time I shall never forget, for I know it to be a solemn fact that my dear father's spirit came amongst us again, and, perhaps, for the last time before we join him in the other world.

I think, with one more personal experience, I must close this chapter. A short time since, being somewhat out of health, I took a house in the country, for change. It was an old house, and had been vacant for many years, but it possessed a charming garden and was, apparently, just what I wanted. I entered it in the month of October, with only a maid-servant and groom to set things right for me. The first night I slept there, no carpets were down, nor curtains up, and the whole place was in a state of disorder and discomfort. But I was dead-tired, and, having locked my bedroom door, I retired to rest, turning the gas out, as I never can sleep with a light in my room. I was first wakened by hearing the door of my room burst open. In my drowsy condition, I forgot that I had locked it, and, thinking the wind must have blown it open, I got out of bed, lighted my gas, and proceeded to fasten it again, when I found, to my surprise, that it was still locked. It was very strange; but, supposing I must have been dreaming, I put out the light and retired to bed again. I had hardly done so, when the door burst open a second

time. I rose again; but, as it was still fastened, I concluded some spirits were having a game with me, and, as I don't care for spirits whom I do not know, I left the gas alight as I lay down.

The next time I was aroused, it was by feeling a hand and arm slipped, very gently, under my waist as I lay on my side in bed. I was again very drowsy, and my first idea was, that some one had come for the watch that was under my pillow, so I made a grab at the hand which was under the bedclothes, and held it fast. It pulled and pulled against me, with a force that would have been remarkable in a mortal, and, finally, pulled itself out of my grasp, but not before I had felt that it was a very small, thin hand, with an attenuated bony wrist, and claw-like fingers. As soon as it got free, I attempted to jump out of bed and seize the body it belonged to, but found that my head and shoulders were enveloped in some heavy substance, which proved, on inspection, to be my traveling rug, which had been placed on a chair near the bedside. As soon as I had disentangled myself, I leapt up, but the room was still empty and the door locked.

The next night, I kept the gas burning, but went fast asleep, nevertheless. I had retired very early, having been hard at work all day, leaving my servants downstairs. Some time later, I was suddenly waked by the noise of shouting and laughing, on the staircase outside my room. It sounded as if the groom was pursuing the maid up the stairs, and she was shrieking and screaming to get away from him. Being a great stickler for decorum in the kitchen, I was both outraged and disgusted at this supposed want of respect. "How dare they," I said to myself, "make that indecent noise on the stairs, when they know that I am in my bedroom?" and I jumped out of bed, determined to bring the offenders to book at once. Opening

the door, I called "Ellen !" in an authoritative voice, but no servants were within sight, or call. Added to which, the gas lamps were turned out, both in the upper and lower corridors. I lit my own gas and looked at my watch. The hands pointed to three. Evidently, the servants were in bed and fast asleep, upstairs.

As soon as possible, I referred the matter to Dewdrop, who told me that, many years before, the house I lived in, had been a private lunatic asylum; that the spirit who had tried to pull me out of bed was that of a lunatic woman, who had died there; that she had always been most troublesome to get to bed, and that the shrieking and hysterical laughing that had disturbed me, were the sounds she made as the doctor pursued her upstairs each night. She added that the doctor looked like a foreigner; that he was fat and had a black waxed mustache, and she did not like him.

"But *I* do not like them, either, Dewdrop," I answered; "if they are going to wake me up nightly in this fashion, I shall have to leave the house."

"Florence will take care of that," said Dewdrop. "She has already told the woman spirit that she must not enter your bedroom again, as she is afraid, if you saw her, you might be frightened. Not that there is anything to be frightened at—she would not hurt you, only she looks so strange—she is so small and thin, and her hair is quite white and hangs all over her face. Florence has told her she may run about the corridors, but she is not to cross the threshold of your room again."

I felt thankful for small mercies, but would have, infinitely, preferred that the lunatic lady had been banished altogether. However, she never annoyed me after that.

Being curious to test the truth of what I had heard, I asked the agent of the house (who had occasion to visit

me on business, shortly afterwards) if it had ever been a lunatic asylum.

He stared at the question; "*Never!*" he replied, most emphatically. "Whatever put such an idea into your head?"

I answered, cursorily, that a rumor of the kind had reached me. He told me it was all nonsense; that the house had been vacant for seven years before I took it, in consequence of the owner's death; that he had occupied it for twenty years; and that, if it had ever been used as an asylum of any kind, the agent, who had known the owner all that time, would certainly have heard of it. So I said no more.

The next time my sailor son was at home, he was sitting in my drawing-room, in the dusk, with a lady visitor and myself, when she expressed a wish to see a certain book, which was in a bookcase in the room he occupied, and which was on the same landing as mine. I asked him if he would go and fetch it for our friend, and he rose at once to do so. In a minute, however, he returned, saying it was so dark he could not see the titles of the volumes, and must have a light. The lady, however, begged he would not trouble himself further, and presently took her leave. As soon as she was gone, my son said to me: "I'm not going up those stairs in the dark again, in a hurry. This house is haunted. As I was nearing the door of my room, which was shut, it opened, and a woman came out of it, and went into Bertie's room, and closed the door after her."

"Are you sure?" I demanded. "What was she like?"

"A little, skinny woman, with long, thin arms, and a lot of white hair hanging over her face. A horrible-looking woman; I don't like it."

After this, he complained to me more than once of hav-

ing seen the apparition in his room; and, when he came home with his wife, and occupied the same apartment, he told me he had waked up, to find the lunatic's spirit hanging over his bed, and was in terror lest his wife should wake and see it too.

This was confirmatory of Dewdrop's account, but did not explain the agent's denial of the house having been used as an asylum. As the autumn drew near, the fruit trees wanted more attention than my gardener knew how to give them, and I obtained the name of a man who was considered a proficient in pruning. He was a very old man, with white hair, and, one day, he told me, as we were discussing gardening matters together, that he remembered the garden when it had two men and a boy to look after it, and was "the sweetest bit o' ground" in the place.

"This house has been built for a hundred years now," he continued. "I can remember it when my father worked here, and I was a little boy. Eh, but they had a power o' fruit here then; there weren't no finer fruit, nor flowers, in all the country-side."

"You mean when Mr. B—— lived here, I suppose," I said, naming the owner of the house.

"O, no, ma'am," he replied; "I am speaking of years before Mr. B—— bought the place, when the doctor had it."

"The doctor!" I echoed, pricking up my ears; "do you mean the doctor who used to keep mad people here?"

The old man turned round and regarded me in the most curious manner.

"Whoever told you, as he kept mad people here, ma'am?" he asked, peering at me from under his shaggy eyebrows.

"Never mind who told me," I said; "you see I know it. Wasn't it the case?"

"Well," said the gardener, thoughtfully, "I can't think however you found it out, for there's hardly a body but myself left to tell it you, and I'm sure *I* didn't. It was all kept so dark and quiet, that not a soul in the place knew the truth, till the law came down upon the doctor one day, and he had to give up his patients, and house, and everything. That's the truth, ma'am. There was found to be eight or ten mad ladies and gentlemen here, and the doctor hadn't no license for keeping them, and I heard he got into sad trouble over it. But whoever could have told *you*, now?"

But the old gardener was never satisfied on that point, though I was satisfied that my spirit friends had given me the true version of the story.

CHAPTER XI.

A CHANCE SÉANCE WITH A STRANGER.

I made a short tour through the provinces this spring, to deliver a lecture that proved, on the testimony of the Scriptures, that the practice of Spiritualism was both right and true. In the course of my wanderings, I arrived at the city of Nottingham, where I was met by my host, Mr. James Fraser Hewes. It was on a Friday afternoon, and, as I was not to lecture until Saturday, Mr. Hewes, with a view to filling up the time, asked me if I would like to attend a materializing seance that evening with a Mrs. Davidson, of South Shields. I had never heard the name of this medium, though, I am aware, there are several good ones stowed away in the provincial towns, and I asked Mr. Hewes what her mediumship was like. But he, also, had never had the privilege of sitting with Mrs. Davidson before, so could give me no information on the subject. She had been invited to Nottingham, by a gentleman of the name of Bostock, who was sitting with her and his friends at his private residence. Mr. and Mrs. Hewes had been invited for that evening; but, as for myself, I was supposed to be at Walsall, which was the last place I had lectured at. It was decided, then, that I should accompany my hosts to the meeting incognito, and, after tea, we set out for Mr. Bostock's house. This gentleman, though, doubtless, possessing every virtue under the sun, does not understand the proper conditions for obtaining good materializations.

It was one of the few warm nights which we have enjoyed this spring, and his seance room was insufferably

crowded by some thirty gentlemen and ladies, whilst, in order to darken the apartment, every breath of fresh air was carefully excluded. I felt, on entering it, as if I could not stay a minute there. It was like the atmosphere of a hothouse. By means of a very narrow gangway, we were enabled to get to the chairs reserved for our accommodation, which proved to be near the cabinet, mine being the sixth seat from it. This cabinet, if it can be called so, was composed of a piece of green silesia, nailed across one corner of the room, with just enough space behind it to admit a chair.

"Where is the medium?" I whispered to Mr. Hewes.

"In the next room," he replied. "She is so frightened of going into the cabinet, that the spirits are obliged to bring her into the seance room under control, or they would not be able to persuade her to enter it." And then he added: "How surprised they would be"—meaning the sitters—"if they knew who was sitting with them. No one knows you will be in the town until to-morrow night."

At this juncture, Mrs. Davidson entered the room. She is a miner's wife, and was dressed in accordance with her class; she has a pleasant face, but, at this moment, it looked worried and anxious.

"O, this heat! this heat!" she exclaimed, looking in a bewildered way around her; "we shall never get anything in this heat."

When I say *she* said so, I mean the spirit who was controlling her, and who was a man whose name I did not catch. Mr. Bostock immediately asked what he should do—should he open the windows, etc.? This proposal was seconded and acceded to; but still the medium look uneasy.

"So many; too many!" *she* murmured; "we shall get nothing, I am afraid."

Mr. Bostock then asked if some of the sitters should be sent away, but the control did not think that would be fair.

"We must not disappoint them like that," he replied, "and when they have come so far. We will do our best, friends, and no one can do more. But I am very much afraid that we shall get nothing."

So it will be seen that no great things were expected from the evening's sitting, and, as for myself, I simply prepared to remain in a warm bath till the seance concluded, and directed my attention solely to keeping as still and as cool as was possible under the circumstance.

And, here, it would not be out of place, perhaps, to make a few remarks on the mistakes perpetrated in this particular, by people who have organized many more seances, perhaps, than Mr. Bostock. A seance room should *never be crowded*, especially on a warm night. In order to procure materialization, it is essential to have a moderate atmosphere, neither too hot, nor too cold. The sitters, too, should be selected with discretion, being, if possible, equally divided between the sexes, and admitting none who are very feeble or diseased amongst them. And if half the claimants for admittance have been used to sit at seances, and the other half have not, very few of the latter should be admitted at a time. They should be "sneaked in," as it were, by ones and twos, until their aura shall be thoroughly absorbed in that of the more experienced sitters. Such a system, if carefully carried out, would give the influences far less difficulties to contend against, and lead to a more successful issue.

But to return to Mrs. Davidson's mediumship. We sat for some time in "silence and tears" (of perspiration), without anything occurring—then a voice issued from behind the curtain: "Will the lady sitting in the sixth chair from

the cabinet change seats with the lady who is sitting next to it?"

This move placed me close to the silesia curtain, so that I could hear the least movement inside of it. I had not sat there long, however, before the inside of the cabinet was illuminated, by some mysterious spirit light, so that I could see the medium sitting in her chair, with her black gown on, and the little shawl pinned across her shoulders, whilst her head was sunk forward on her breast. A lady, who was sitting just behind me, said she saw it too, *i. e.*, that she perceived the strange illumination, which seemed, to her, as if she were facing an uncurtained window in the daylight; but she did not see the medium's figure, as I did. Yet, though I perceived this quite plainly, I saw no spirits forming, as heretofore, nor anything except the medium. Presently a child's voice—one, I believe, of the medium's controls—asked the circle to sing something, and we joined in a well-known melody. The curtain was pulled on one side, and a little girl, of about nine or ten years old, in appearance, peeped out and disappeared again.

"Who is that?" demanded Mr. Bostock; "can't you tell us?"

"That's little Gertie," was the answer, "come for the lady sitting next the cabinet. Sing something livelier, please; she likes lively tunes."

The sitters then struck up a hymn in quicker measure, and "Gertie" came out again. This time she held up her white skirts and swayed from one side to the other in a sort of slow dance, showing her little bare feet. I asked her to speak to me, or kiss me, but at each request she disappeared again, so I did not press the point. After she had shown herself four or five times, she retreated, making way for my daughter Florence, whose appearance I can never mistake—she is so slender and young and virginal-looking,

with such a saintly air about her, as if she came fresh from Heaven. Knowing her to be such a strong spirit—strong, I mean, in being able to show herself to mortal sight—I thought her presence might save the seance and turn it into a success, so I exclaimed: "O Florence, I am so glad you have come. Do show yourself more plainly, if possible, for we are afraid we shall not have much of a seance this evening."

But Florence did not appear inclined to come out into the room; on the contrary, as I addressed her, she drew backward, and laid her finger on her lip. I reiterated my request, and then she bent her head forward, till I could hear her whisper: "Not to-night, mother! Some one is coming."

But I had not the least idea to whom she alluded. I begged her to tell me. "*Who* is it that is coming, Florence?" I said.

She bent her head forward again, and whispered in a very low tone, "Eva!"

My heart literally stood still. This is the name of my beloved eldest daughter, whom I had the misfortune to lose in childbirth, nearly seven years ago, and whom I have been longing and praying to see ever since, but without effect. I began to tremble so violently I could hardly keep still on my seat, and I felt as if I should suffocate. The announcement was so unexpected to me. Here was I, who had been entreating the Almighty for the last seven years to afford me a little glimpse of this most cherished possession of my life, doomed to meet her for the first time since she had been torn from my arms, in company with strangers, who knew nothing of my loss, nor could sympathize with it. I thought I must run out of the room, to avoid making a fool of myself—though why one *should* be thought a fool for giving way to a natural emotion, puzzles me.

In a few more minutes, the curtain was lifted again, and my darling girl, with her little baby in her arms, stood before me, but well within the shelter of the cabinet. She held out her infant to me, as though she would secure recognition by that means. But I could not look at either of them. The agony of my spirit quite overcame me, and I lost all control of myself. I sunk down on my knees, as if God Himself had been before me, and sobbed as I had not done for years past. I did not expect that she would come again. I thought my uncontrollable grief would upset her, and, perhaps, spoil conditions; but I could not help it. Judge of my surprise, therefore, when my darling girl, having got rid of her baby, came right out of the cabinet again, and, reaching my side, where I knelt there, weeping, stooped over me, took my head, and laid it on her dear breast, and wiped away my tears with her veil, as she kept on kissing me, and repeating: "Don't cry, mother; don't cry." At the moment, I could only press my head against her, and thank God that He had answered my constant prayer, and let me see my darling again; but, looking back upon the interview, I can distinctly remember and describe the features which struck me most in it. Her veil, as it wiped my wet face, felt like silk net, but very fine and soft, and it effectually dried my tears, which net would not have done; it was, also, scented with some perfume-like incense. I could feel the softness of her lips, as she kissed me, and her warm breath coming through them; and her whole body seemed to be pervaded with the same subtle perfume, as if she had been a *sachet*. Her face was warm and very soft, like the flesh of a newborn baby, and those who regarded her more mechanically than I had the power to do, told me, afterwards, that she was very pale, and her head and face were much enveloped by her voluminous veil.

After Eva had left, Florence informed us that she intended to, and would have, walked out into the circle with me, had not my emotion upset her, so that she lost the power of doing it. This, with the exception of a few remarks from inside the cabinet, from Mrs. Davidson's controls, concluded the seance. Only three spirits had appeared, and they had been my three daughters. I was very sorry for the other sitters, but it was not my fault. Nevertheless, I felt terribly guilty, and as if I—the one stranger amongst them—had monopolized the whole of their evening. The only consolation I had was in being told that, if I had not been there, they would have got nothing at all.

The medium was so overcome by the heat that, as soon as she was taken into another room, she fainted. Before we left the house, some one told her who I was, and she asked if I would speak to her. When I saw her in her normal condition, and told her what a treat she had given me, and how grateful I was to her for it, she told me that she knew I was to speak at North Shields before my tour was ended, and would I promise, when I went there, to go and have another sitting with her at her own home? I promised, more than gladly, to do so, and, in less than a fortnight afterwards, I found myself on my way to her house. Mrs. Davidson and her friends received me most hospitably, and I felt at home with them at once.

The house was a humble one, in the suburbs of South Shields, and the front kitchen, or parlor, in which we sat, had a bricked floor. The circle consisted of a few residents in the neighborhood, and some of Mrs. Davidson's own friends, who sung so heartily, and so much in unison, during the proceedings, that they were an example to most Spiritualists. They were, evidently, accustomed to singing together, and had taken the trouble to practice their

hymns and songs. I found that Mr. Davidson was, also, a medium, and was under control most of the time, though he sat in the circle with the rest of us.

When we commenced business, the medium particularly requested that my chair should be placed next the silesia curtain and *touching hers,* so that she might get all my influence. This was, accordingly, done, so that, during the whole of the evening, our arms were next each other's, as well as our knees. I suppose, if a medium wanted to cheat, and was conscious of doing so, that this was about the most foolish request she could have made, as the slightest movement on my part would have discovered any trickery on hers.

The first spirit that appeared, on this occasion, was, also, "Gertie," who came right out of the cabinet, and spoke to and touched several of the sitters. I had plenty of opportunity this evening of observing her dress, which was made in a curious fashion. She seemed to wear an under-frock, fitting tightly to her body, over which hung a loose robe, reaching from her throat to her feet, of some diaphanous material, so that her bare arms and neck could be plainly seen through it; and, when she swayed about in her dancing measure, and lifted her little arms, it was from *under* the upper robe that I saw them, and they were covered by this robe, as she extended them. She was much stronger, however, than on the first occasion, and, apparently, quite fearless. She leaned her two little arms on my knees, and jumped, as children will, pressing all her weight on me as she did so. She crossed the room and shook hands with a lady sitting opposite to me, saying, in answer to the question who she was: "I'm mother's little Gertie." She appeared several times, and, on leaving for the last time, dematerialized in our sight, *going down through the brick floor.*

This is what I have seldom seen since I left America, though I remember an incident, occurring through the mediumship of Mr. Cecil Husk, which I omitted to relate, when writing of my sittings with him. Being on chatty and confidential terms with all his controls, we had often "chaffed" Uncle, because he would not show his face to us, and his nephew, Christopher, had declared it was because he was too much ashamed of it. Goaded on by this libelous accusation, Uncle, at last, announced that he was coming out of the cabinet, fully materialized. We were all much interested to hear this, as it is pleasant to meet a friend you have known through mutual converse for so long, face to face; so we were on the tiptoe of expectation to make the personal acquaintance of Uncle. Presently, after several ineffectual attempts, which were heralded by scornful laughter from his undutiful nephew, poor Uncle issued from the cabinet. But either he had miscalculated his physical strength, or he did not know the difficulties of materialization; for, in the first place, he was not half the size he ought to have been, and, in the second, he commenced to tumble to pieces as soon as he encountered the mortal gaze fixed on him. He just managed to hobble round half the circle, holding his drapery together, as if it were too long, and he should stumble over it, when, as he had reached the middle of the room—sad to relate—poor Uncle tumbled right down in the floor and began to melt away. He would have dematerialized altogether before us, had not John King thrust his hand out of the cabinet, and seizing hold of Uncle's remains, pulled them bodily out of sight. I shall never forget the effect of Uncle being pulled off the stage, like a bundle of rags, nor the shrieks of laughter with which his efforts were rewarded. To this day, he does not like us to mention his attempt at materialization, and, as he did it simply at our

repeated request, it does seem rather unkind to ridicule his failure.

But this is a long divergence from my little Gertie. As soon as she had left us, Eva appeared again, this time without her infant, and evidently with much more power than at Nottingham. My brother-in-law, Edward Church, whom I mention in "There is no Death," had given me a gold ring, with A. E. I. in dark-blue enamel on it, which ring, after his death, I had given to my daughter Eva, in remembrance of him. A month before her own death, I had gone down to where she was staying, at Southend, and found this ring in her work-basket.

"If you don't care for this ring of poor Ted's," I said to her, "I will take it back again; for I don't like to see it lying about. Perhaps I should not have parted with it at all, as it was a keepsake."

She replied that she generally wore it; that she had only just slipped it off; but that, if I would like to have it again, I was quite welcome to resume possession. Accordingly, I put the ring on my own finger and gave her some little trifle in exchange. Since I lost her, only a month afterwards, I have worn the ring night and day, in memory of her, rather than of my brother-in-law. It is quite an unpretentious one, and almost hidden beneath my other rings.

On the night I am writing of, the first thing Eva did, on leaving the cabinet, was to put her finger on this little ring, and say: "*My* ring, mother!" and she twisted it round and round on my finger with her own.

She looked just the same as she had done on the first occasion, the only difference that I could perceive from her appearance during earth-life being that her luxuriant hair was concealed by the veil twisted round her head, and her face seemed smaller than it used to be—more as it looked as she lay in her coffin, when she had the semblance of a girl of

fourteen. Her hair had been cut off, also, during her illness, and I have noticed before, that spirits, on their first reappearance after death, generally *come as they left the earth, and not as they lived on it.*

There was a lady present, a stranger to me (as, indeed, was everybody there that night, excepting Mrs. Davidson), named Mrs. Elliot, and Eva crossed the room to where this lady sat, and, taking her hand, placed it in mine and closed her own over them both. I have not yet unraveled the significance of this action, though Mrs. Elliot told me afterwards that she is a medium, and she fancied my daughter wished to signify that she would be able, or would like to, manifest through her. That, however, is a riddle which has not yet been solved. The action excited my curiosity, because Eva was a very undemonstrative girl to strangers, and it seemed so unlike her to take at first sight to any one.

During this sitting, she came out of the cabinet five separate times, on three of which she drew aside the curtain, and showed us the medium sitting in her Windsor chair, her black dress being palpably distinct against the white robes of the spirit.

An article was afterwards written by Mr. Elliot on this seance and published in the newspapers, signed by all present, who testified to the appearance of my daughter, and the ease with which she spoke and moved about; it cannot, therefore, have been the effect of my vivid imagination, only.

The spirit that succeeded Eva was my Persian control, Abdullah Ben-adad Pen-rudah Mahomet Abdullah, to whom I have referred before, in these pages. He was attired just as he had appeared through Mr. Husk, and his black beard was plaited in the same curious manner. He addressed himself to no one in the company but

myself; but as he can only speak his own language, I was as wise as they were. Abdullah hopes, some day, to be able to speak English, or to teach me to speak Persian, after which we may be able to converse; for the present, however, we understand each other remarkably well. As an English soldier, who had married a Tamil girl in India, once said to me, when I asked him how he contrived to converse with his wife—neither of them knowing a word of the other's language: "Well, ma'am, love has only one language all over the world, you know!" So my Persian guide can make me understand something of what he would say, if we could talk together. On this occasion, he came straight up to my side, and bending down first, kissed my feet, and, then rising, kissed my forehead, and stood by me, with his hand upon my head. I knew exactly what he intended to convey by these actions: that he was at my command; that he cared for me, and that he influenced my brain. After which, he addressed a long speech to me, in what I presume to have been Persian, and I replied, in English, that I had not understood one word of what he had been saying, but that I thanked him for watching over me and influencing me. And, at that, Abdullah smiled very sweetly, and withdrew into the cabinet again.

He was followed by a Red Indian chief, a control of Mr. Davidson, whose characteristics were so markedly dissimilar from those of the soft-eyed and voiced Persian, that every one present was struck by them. The Red Indian literally "swooped down" upon the circle, running round it in a half crouching position, and making various darts at the sitters, as though he would stab them, laughing loudly and somewhat harshly as they started or shrunk away from them. He had, also, black hair, but long and straight, without any beard or mustache, and a copper-

colored complexion. His arms, too, were bare. He whooped once or twice as he went round the room; but no one responded very ardently to his attentions, so he cut his visit rather short.

A young lady came, next, for an old gentleman present; but, as he sat opposite to me, I did not see her face. He told me, however, that he fully recognized her, and that she was the spirit of a medium who had been used, at one time, to sit in concert with Mrs. Mellon, late Miss Fairlamb.

Immediately succeeding her, appeared an older lady, who was also recognized by her friends, and made the sixth form that had presented itself that evening.

Lastly, came a most interesting apparition, that of a woman very closely muffled, who left the cabinet and stood just outside, turning her head round and round the circle, as if she were in search of somebody. As I sat next to her, I said: "Are you looking for some one? Who is it you want?"

The form turned to me, and pointed with her finger towards a young man, who was sitting, with two or three women, on a sofa, at the further end of the little apartment.

"Who is it?" I asked her again: "Your brother?"

She shook her head, and I heard her faintly whisper, "My son, my son."

I then said aloud to the young man (who was, of course, totally unknown to me, even by name): "This spirit says she is your mother. She wants you to come and speak to her."

But he shook his head, and turned his face the other way, so as to conceal it. The spirit seemed dreadfully hurt. She advanced a few steps into the room, and held out her arms imploringly to her son.

Mr. Elliot, who was sitting next me, said to her: "Give

him time. He is too much overcome to realize that it is yourself." He wore a buttonhole of lilies of the valley, and he took them out and placed them in her hand. She held the flowers out for the acceptance of her son. Still the young man did not make any advances towards her. I felt rather indignant. It seemed so much as if he did not care; but I was told afterwards that he was really too nervous to encounter the spirit. I spoke to him again; I said: "Do you understand that this is the spirit of your mother? Do you not recognize her?"

He replied: "O, yes; I know it is my mother! I do not doubt it; but I don't want to see her, or speak to her."

This appeared to be so incomprehensible to me, that I said to the spirit: "Perhaps he cannot believe that it is you. Will you let me see your face, so that I may describe it to him?"

She immediately turned towards me, and eagerly pulled the white wrappings off her features, so as to make them perfectly distinguishable. Had she been Mrs. Davidson, masquerading as the young man's mother, it would have been a very rash thing to do. But she did it without hesitation, and as though she were anxious that I should see her as plainly as I did. As I looked in her face, I said: "This spirit has dark eyes, rather small; a long nose, pointed chin, and rather sharp features. Was that anything like your mother?"

"Yes! yes!" replied the young man. "It is her. I know that perfectly. But I cannot speak to her." And he turned his head away again, as if he wanted to bury himself behind the young woman who sat beside him.

The spirit seemed strangely agitated. Whether there had been any serious disagreement between her and her son, of course, I cannot tell; but I had never seen a spirit act as she did before. She sunk down on her knees on the

bricked floor, and hid her face in her hands, and sobbed audibly. I bent over her with some words of consolation, telling her that her son would speak to her next time; that he was too much overcome to do so that evening, etc., etc., when she, suddenly, sprung to a standing position, and flung her arms round my neck, and kissed me several times. I could feel that her face was wet, and, when she went into the cabinet again, she left her tears upon my cheek. This is one of the very few times that I have seen a materialized spirit weep.

The circle that sat with Mrs. Davidson and myself, at Nottingham, said, afterwards, that, when my dearest child wiped the tears from my face, they could hear her sob in unison with me; but I was too much affected to notice it for myself. But it is a rare occurrence, and, when it happens, you may be sure it is *for us* they weep, and not for themselves.

The appearance of this spirit exhausted the medium's powers for that evening, and, soon after she left us, a voice from the cabinet proclaimed the seance to be at an end. He had scarcely done so, when Mrs. Davidson stepped out from behind her flimsy curtain, and came amongst us again, bright and chatty, as she entered it, and with no appearance of drowsiness or fatigue about her.

Now, here were two seances held with a medium who had never seen me, or any of my family, or intimate friends before; who had never even heard of my name, except through my publications; who was in a position where she was quite unlikely to have gained any knowledge of my private life—its joys, or its sorrows—producing, from a bricked floor, the counterpart of my two daughters and my Persian control. Where did they come from? What were they? How did she do it? The theory of a miner's wife being able to dress up, and paint her face, and assume

different disguises, behind a few yards of silesia, and with her chair touching mine, without my knowing that she was rustling and fidgeting about, is too ridiculous to be believed, even if she were clever enough to assume the properties of a "quick-change" artist, or if it would be worth her while, considering she got nothing for her trouble. And, added to this, the forms, who appear through her agency, can recognize *their* friends, as well as be recognized, and speak with them on familiar subjects. Who, but myself, then present, knew that the little, thin gold ring, half-hidden beneath others, had belonged to my dead child, or if the old woman, who came for her son, had been but an effigy? How could *I*, a perfect stranger to both, have described her features to him, so that he recognized them? No, it is evident that the scientists, and philosophers, and sceptics, and atheists, must find some cause to account for these phenomena, other than fraud, or self-delusion. *One* person may be self-deluded, or insane, but the hardest head of the lot would hardly credit a dozen people with all being self-deceived at the same time. And, mark my words, the day will come, and is not far off at the present moment, when the *mad* people will be those who *do not* believe, instead of those who do. The dead return. This is an undoubted truth. That they are not those whom they represent themselves to be is the sceptic's business to prove.

Since there has been so much suspicion created by the impossibility of allowing much light at a materializing seance, I must not close this chapter without describing that used by Mrs. Davidson, which was the brightest I have seen allowed, since leaving America. The room, as I have said before, was a very small one, and a dim light would have been sufficient to illuminate it. Instead of which, Mrs. Davidson had an oil lamp, with a thin reflector behind

it, placed on the mantelpiece, just opposite the cabinet; and before the chimney was placed a sheet of orange-colored tissue paper, loosely crumpled together, which shaded the glare, without obscuring the light. I can attest that we had not been seated five minutes before I could see everything in the room as distinctly as if the lamp had been unshaded. I never witnessed less preparations made for any sitting, and I consider the manifestations I was privileged to see, through the mediumship of Mrs. Davidson, to be as pure and genuine as any I have ever been present at.

CHAPTER XII.

A SEANCE WITH MR. RITA.

By the invitation of some old friends of mine, Dr. and Mrs. A——, I started one evening to hold a seance at their house, with Mr. Rita. It had, for a long time, been my ambition to sit with this medium, who is a private gentleman, pursuing Spiritualism for his own gratification only, and that of his friends. It is very seldom, indeed, that Mr. Rita can be persuaded to sit—and then it is only in a private circle and amongst people whom he knows. I presume he has been compelled to make this rule, or he would be inundated with requests for seances, to the detriment of his health and his employment. Because it is difficult to get a sitting with him, was the principal reason that I was so anxious to make the acquaintance of Mr. Rita, and be a personal witness of the wonderful powers which had been described to me.

We assembled at the house of Dr. and Mrs. A——, at six o'clock, and, after having all dined in company, we entered the seance room.

There are two most desirable and, at the same time, most remarkable peculiarities about the mediumship of Mr. Rita—he never uses a cabinet, and he never goes under control, so that he can enjoy the seance as much as anybody else. He simply takes his seat at the table, with the circle, in the dark, and his spirits bring their own lights with them, in the fashion of John King. Mr. Rita engages in conversation, also, the whole time the seance is going on—addressing the spirits, in common with his other friends, so that we

enjoyed the novelty of communion with both medium and controls at the same time.

Before we settled ourselves for the evening, a well-known American lady doctor, Dr. M—— K——, joined the company. Although she hailed from the United States, she had actually never been present at a materializing seance in her life before, and was most curious on the subject. She, also, had been dining out, but with other friends, whom she had begged to excuse her for an hour after dinner, to attend this sitting, and she entered, in her dinner dress and evening cloak, quite excited by the prospect before her. I had heard her name, but never had the pleasure of meeting her before. She was very handsome, with the delicate features peculiar to her country-women, and was beautifully dressed. She did not give one the idea of a learned doctor, whose time was spent in studying the diseases of humanity; nevertheless, it was true that she had attained a name in her profession, and had a large clientele of patients. This fact alone augured that Dr. M—— K—— was a clever and accomplished woman—one, whose word would be taken on most scientific subjects, and who might reasonably be expected not to be led away by her imagination, or her fears. She spoke with me on the subject of Spiritualism before the seance commenced, and I found her not at all *too* ready to believe it, or even to be convinced of its truth. She expressed herself as very curious to discover if what her friends told her concerning it was worthy of belief; but, at the same time, she spoke most dispassionately and entirely reserved her own opinion. Had I been asked, I should have said that Dr. M—— K—— was just the person to investigate the science, for one might be sure of an impartial judgment from her.

By this time, we had taken our seats round the table, Dr. and Mrs. A—— sitting either side of the medium, and

Dr. M—— K—— and I opposite to them, whilst the intervening spaces were filled by strangers to me. We kept up a smart conversation the while, conversing on the different topics that interested us, Mr. Rita being the smartest of us all.

Almost as soon as the lights were extinguished, a spirit face rose up so suddenly before Dr. M—— K—— and me, and so close to our own, that she called out with surprise. It was plainly an East Indian face, with its thin aquiline features, and mournful, dark eyes. The head was dressed with the national "puggree" of white muslin, twisted in the shape of a turban, and in front of it hung a sparkling jewel. This head returned several times to show itself, and, finally, was accompanied by another of the same nationality. The medium did not know who they were, but said that they generally made the first appearance at his seances. Meanwhile, a familiar control of his, called "Charlie," kept up a running fire of conversation with him and the circle generally. Charlie seemed very much interested in Dr. M—— K—— and addressed most of his discourse to her.

Me, he accosted by the title of "Lady No Death," at which witticism he appeared to be mightily amused himself.

Presently, a man's head came, fully illuminated, in front of Dr. M—— K—— and myself. I had never seen this lady, as I have said before; but there was no mistaking the likeness between her and the spirit who now appeared to us. It was that of an elderly man, of perhaps sixty years of age, with silvery gray hair, mustache and beard—but the same delicate features as Dr. M—— K——, the same eyes and mouth and oval-shaped face. It was just as though she had assumed a gray wig and beard. The head came close to her and murmured, "God bless you!" Dr. M—— K—— exclaimed, "My father!" and became very much

agitated. There could be no doubt in the minds of all present that her grief and agitation were genuine. She wept copiously, as she addressed the spirit in terms of the deepest affection, and assured him how completely she recognized him, and how she longed to see her mother, also. At this request, the father retreated, to give place to the mother, whom she recognized quite as fully as she had him. She kept on entreating the spirits to return "only once more," until I thought we should get no other manifestations that evening—the power was so much used up. At last, however, she let them go, but it was some time before her agitation subsided. I could hear her sobbing, quietly, in the dark, beside me, and considered her testimony to the genuineness of Mr. Rita's mediumship as one of the most valuable Spiritualism could have gained.

It is the testimony of such brains as those of Dr. M—— K—— that we want—not the enthusiasm of fools, who would worship a scooped-out turnip with a rushlight inside it, if told that it was the spirit of their dearest friend. Dr. M—— K—— had come to that seance a perfectly unprejudiced woman, but, at the same time, a perfectly calm and dispassionate-minded one—as ready to expose deceit and trickery as she was to acknowledge the faces she saw to be those of her parents. It was a valuable proof to me, because the faces were as close to me as they were to her, and I, not being so moved by their appearance, was better able to examine their features and trace the unmistakable resemblance between them and my new acquaintance.

"Charlie" indulged, now, in a little amicable "sparring" with me, because, hearing how loudly he spoke in the direct voice, I asked him if he had materialized a perfect thorax and gullet. He replied that he had.

"And have you a tongue and teeth, and everything pertaining to the mouth and throat, Charlie?" I continued.

"Put your forefinger out as far as you can, Lady No Death," he replied, "and I will show you if I have."

I did as he desired me, and a hand met my finger in the dark and guided it to a mouth. It was an enormous mouth—a perfect cave of Adullam, where you might have hidden seventy prophets.

"Isn't that a mouth?" demanded Charlie of me, "and a very fine mouth, too?"

I acquiesced in his decision.

"Well, put your finger right in it," he continued; "don't be afraid: I won't bite you, and tell them what you feel."

I put my finger in the mouth, and felt all round it carefully. The interior was moist and smooth, like the mouth of any mortal. I could feel the palate and the tongue, which seemed also very large; then I made a tour of the gums, which felt swollen, like those of a teething baby; but there were no teeth. I told the circle just what I had felt, adding: "You must be very young, Charlie, since you have not yet cut your teeth?"

"Yes," he answered; "it is about time I cut them, I think. Don't you agree with me?" and, with my finger still in his mouth, all the teeth sprung into existence, both of the upper and lower jaw, and Charlie gave my finger such a bite that I called out and withdrew it.

Next, there appeared a magnificent apparition in the center of the table—an Indian prince, very stout and very dark, dressed in white clothing, with chains of gold and jewels hung round his neck and resting on his capacious chest, and a turban on his head, flashing with emeralds and rubies and diamonds. His complexion was very dark —almost swarthy—for an East Indian, and his features were thick and ugly.

As he came, Mrs. A—— exclaimed: "O, here is the Maharajah!"

To explain why such a gorgeous potentate visited our little circle, I must premise that Mrs. A—— had been married before, to Captain N——, an officer in the Indian army, and that, when she was a bride, and a very youthful one, her husband and she, in company with several other Europeans, were invited to a state dinner with the Maharajah of (I forget the name of his dominion). As Mrs. N—— was very young and very fair, and the only lady present, the Maharajah, who was also then quite young, took a great deal of notice of her, and, when the state dinner was concluded, he asked leave to conduct her to the presence of his mother, the Ranee, who resided in the palace, but, of course, according to Oriental customs, could not be present at the feast. Captain N—— at once acceded to this request; but the poor little bride was frightened out of her wits at the idea of having to go away alone with the Maharajah, and vehemently declined to do so. The Maharajah's brow grew dark at her refusal, and her husband, fearful lest her obstinacy might lead to something unpleasant with their host, insisted on her accompanying him, to be introduced to the Ranee.

Mrs. A—— has described to me her state of abject terror as the Maharajah took her by the hand and led her away to the women's apartments of the palace. She had to accompany him up dark stairs and through dark passages, all the time fancying, in her girlish folly, that she might never see her husband again, or might be detained there for life, or murdered by the dark-complexioned Indians, whom she dreaded. However, nothing worse happened to her, than being introduced to an old shriveled-up lady, who looked more like a monkey than a woman, as she sat huddled up on a pile of cushions, and who was the chief woman in the palace, being mother to the reigning sovereign. The Ranee looked at her curiously, and asked

several questions, concerning her, of her son, in their own language—all of which was double Dutch to their trembling visitor—and then the ordeal was over, and the bride was safely conducted back to the arms of her natural protector.

But Mrs. A——, although many years have gone by since that time, and she is the mother of grown-up sons, has not yet forgotten her feelings on the subject, and told me that the reappearance of the Maharajah, even as a spirit, recalls them vividly to her. She did not know that he had departed this life, until he came back through Mr. Rita; but, she says, she can recognize him perfectly.

This splendid apparition remained long enough for every one to see him quite plainly, and to examine the magnificent jewels that he wore.

He was succeeded by the spirit of Captain N——, who constantly visits his wife. Mrs. A—— has told me a curious circumstance concerning these visits. Both Dr. A—— and his wife have been married before, and *his* former wife and *her* former husband are amongst the most constant visitors in their seance room. But, although Captain N—— is on the most excellent terms with Dr. A——, calling him his "dear friend," and inditing long letters to him, thanking him for his care of, and goodness to, his wife, he never names Dr. A—— as the husband of his wife, but always as her "companion." He will write or say to the doctor: "God bless you for your tender care of my dear wife;" and to Mrs. A——: "Tell your *companion* how much I thank him for his kindness to you."

Thus, even in death, though we are told that, in the next world, there will be no marriage nor giving in marriage, the spirits who have truly loved on this earth, will maintain their rights over what was truly theirs.

I remember an instance similar to this, regarding a mar-

ried couple, who used to meet, sometimes, at my table. The lady had been married before, and the first husband would come and talk to her about having married again, exactly as he would have done had he been still on earth, and she had committed bigamy. Dr. A——'s first wife and daughter are constantly with him, and the ladies of the two families are on the most friendly and kindly terms with each other, as, indeed, there is no reason they should not be.

I never could understand jealousy of the dead, myself, and think it can only emanate from mean and ignoble minds. True love would wish the survivors to make the best of the life that remains to them—knowing how short it is and how full of evil. But to return to the seance.

Captain N——'s spirit appeared in the full uniform of his regiment, as my friend John Powles did, in America. I mention this (as I do all other details that may seem as trivial) to show how difficult it would be to maintain trickery under such circumstances. Doubtless, that is the reason that some spirits are permitted to appear in the clothes they wore on earth—to prevent the suspicion of foul dealing entering the sitters' minds. What *I* saw (who had never seen Captain N—— in this life) was a slight young man, with dark eyes and hair, and handsome features, dressed, wearing a scarlet uniform, with epaulettes; but I cannot describe the facings, as the spirit stood, all the time, in front of Mrs. A——, and was, consequently, turned from me. He came two or three times, and each time spoke in the direct voice to his wife.

By this time, I had begun to imagine that I should not see Florence that evening at all; though, had I not, Mr. Rita would have been the first medium through whom she had not appeared to me. A little later on, however, I felt a touch on my shoulder from behind, and, turning round,

saw Florence, fully formed, standing behind my chair. She had either formed there, or walked round from the side of Mr. Rita. I asked him if he had perceived her, and he replied that he had seen a female form rise up beside him, but did not know to whom she belonged. I asked Florence why she had not spoken to her medium, and she said: "I wanted to see you first, mother."

Mrs. A—— was anxious to see my daughter more distinctly, as the light she carried was rather dim, and she explained it by the fact of her having come so far away from the medium.

"But I will make it a little brighter for mother's friend," she added; and, stooping down on the ground, like a little child, and holding her two hands, with the light in them, before her, Florence blew and blew upon it, until it flamed up in a spiral curl, like a snake, and wrapped her in its light from head to foot. It seemed to wreathe around her, as though it would set her on fire; but, needless to relate, she smiled serenely from behind it in perfect safety, until it flickered to the ground again.

Florence was clothed, as usual, in white, but of a thicker material than I have generally seen her wear—something more like white cashmere than muslin, and which covered her head and neck. She was just like herself, in other respects, and kissed me, and patted Mrs. A——'s face with her hand, before she walked back to Mr. Rita's side.

There were three or four other spirits, who came at that seance for the other sitters; but, as they were strangers to me, I kept no notes of their appearance. What concerned myself I wrote down, and, I think, it is sufficient to prove what marvelous powers Mr. Rita possesses.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON MEDIUMS AND SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES.

I have been asked, more than once, to give my ideas for the rules and regulations necessary for a Spiritualist Society. Not having had any actual experience of the difficulties attendant on the formation of such a society, I am not aware if my opinion will be worth much—at the same time, I have often noted the failure of such plans, and on the theory of "the bystander seeing most of the game" can, at least, jot down what I consider to have been the cause. Were I about to form such a society, my first move would be to collect sufficient subscribers to insure success, as far as funds were concerned. It is all very well to say that, in so high a cause, money should be a secondary consideration, and that no mercenary ideas should enter into a spiritual matter. Pray, do not Christians pay for the support and promulgation of their religion in every church, from the highest to the lowest? Can they step into any temple to say a prayer, or hear a discourse, without having a bag thrust into their faces, to receive their contributions? Can they enter, or leave, the holy fane without being confronted by a plate full of copper and silver, to which they are expected to add their share? It is all very fine for the parsons to invite their congregations to eat honey and drink milk, without money and without price; but when do the congregations get it? There is not a greater, nor more continuous set of beggars than the clergy of the English Church, and they justify their proceedings by the text that "the laborer is worthy of his

hire." I do not deny the statement, but I contend that the Spiritualist should no more expect to enjoy the privileges of *his* religion for nothing than the Christian.

We live in an age of greed and heavy expenses. Nothing is to be had for nothing in the year of our Lord 1894, and the time is past when congregations could assemble under the greenwood tree to hold their meetings of prayer and praise. A Spiritualist society must have a room to assemble in and preachers to conduct its services, just like the Christians, and such luxuries have to be paid for.

People who were curious to dive into the mysteries of Spiritualism. have said to me, on more than one occasion: "But I wish there was no *money* business about it. It seems to me that it would be so much easier to believe if there was nothing to pay. Money and Spiritualism should have nothing in common. Directly, the money question creeps in, it makes one fancy there *must* be fraud."

But why? Is there, necessarily, fraud in the Church because pew-rents are heavy and subscriptions unceasing? Are the ministers necessarily fraudulent because they draw their stipends quarterly, and gladly rush from a poor parish to a rich one, because it pays them better? And why should mediums, who expend far more strength on the exercise of their profession than any of the clergy, be grudged the reward due to their great work?

My answer to such cavilers usually has been: "I have not the least doubt but that you would like it better if there were no money in question; that you would greatly prefer to get everything free; to take all you could and give nothing in return, and then go home to say that the medium had cheated you for the sake of gaining notoriety. But what would you say if I were to ask you to walk from here to London and back, in order to fetch me a book that should convince me of some vital truth? Your answer

would be that you could afford to expend neither the time nor the strength for such an exploit, and that, if it were absolutely needful I should have the book, I had better pay some one to get it for me.

If you want, therefore, to enquire into the truth of a doctrine that may give you the certain assurance of a future life, you must pay the medium, whose vital powers are fearfully weakened by the use of the powers which will convince you. But, as soon as it comes to the question of paying for their experience, the majority sheer off.

I have been disgusted by the meanness displayed by scores of my acquaintance in this particular. Even total strangers will send me locks of hair, and written queries, with demands for the solution of some mystery, through the means of my clairvoyant friends, never seeming to consider that, if they obtain what they ask for, it is tantamount to entreating a draper to give them a few yards of ribbon, or a pair of gloves, for the mere pleasure of serving them.

The first thing, then, I should look after, in the formation of such a society, would be the coin. I would test the sincerity of those who had expressed a wish to co-operate with me in the venture, by naming an annual subscription, to be paid in advance. If the members of the proposed society should be people of good position, there should, also, be an entrance fee of one guinea, and the annual subscription should be the same.

There need be no limit to the members of the society. If the number should exceed twenty, the meetings for the purpose of sitting should be divided amongst them, *i. e.*, the first twenty on the list should have admittance to the first professional seance, and the next twenty to the second, and so on.

Having secured the great desideratum, my next thought

would be to hire a suitable room to hold the meetings in. This must vary, of course, with the means and generosity of the members; but I would not be responsible for forming a society, until I could command the hire of two fair-sized rooms, or one large one, which could be held sacred to the seances, and put to no other uses during the intervals of the meetings—the key being left, during such periods, in the charge of the secretary.

What a seance room should be like, I have described in the chapter headed "How to investigate Spiritualism." It should be uncarpeted, and the walls should be bare. The furniture to consist of a deal table, unpainted, and as many cane-bottomed chairs as necessary. The window to be provided with a thick, dark-woolen curtain, to be drawn across it during the sittings. When the seance is concluded, the curtain to be withdrawn, and the window opened, to admit the fresh air until the next time of using the room; the table and chairs, also, to be washed with soap and water—not forgetting the floor—as often as is needful. The light to be used demands a careful consideration. The lamp I saw at Mrs. Davidson's appeared to me very desirable—the orange-tinted, crumpled tissue paper, placed to shield it, being favorable to materialization. But the lights used in American seances were still better; and if one is really going in for serious investigation, a few pounds, spent at the beginning, will amply repay themselves in the end. The American lamps were very simple—having four sides of glass, with an oil light in the middle. One pane of glass was red, one blue, one orange, and one plain white. The lamp revolved and the spirits chose which color they desired to use, according to the atmosphere, or the party assembled, or other conditions known only to themselves. If the light from the unused panes were too strong, a crumpled sheet of tissue paper soon remedied the difficulty.

For a public seance room, too, there must assuredly be a cabinet. Now, I utterly object to all tests for a medium, such as tying, or marking, or sewing up in sacks, etc. But, at the same time, I consider a proper cabinet for materializations to be a *sine qua non,* not only for the satisfaction of the sitters, but the safety of the medium.

How many and many a person has sat with reliable mediums, and believed, at the time, that everything was fair and above board (as, indeed, it was), and then, on returning home, being unable, after all, to believe that the marvels they had seen were true, "gone back upon themselves," as it is called, and pronounced the whole affair to have been a fraud. Had the medium been seated in such a cabinet, as I am about to describe to you, such a contradiction would have been avoided. It belonged to the Society of British Spiritualists, and was used in their rooms, in Great Russell street, by William Eglinton. It consisted, as far as I can give measurements from recollection, of a cupboard of plain deal, with two sides, a top and a bottom, the front being left open. I should judge that this cupboard may have been about six feet long by four wide, and eight feet in height. Exactly in the middle of it was a partition of galvanized wire netting, one side of which was enclosed by a wirework door. Where this door opened, were a dozen hasps for padlocks; and any one who chose, was invited to bring his own padlock, and, having fastened it on one of these hasps, to retain the key in his possession. Behind the door was placed a comfortable easy chair, in which the medium sat, who was thus enclosed in a wire cabinet, leaving an empty space of the same size beside him. A dark, thick curtain was drawn right across the front, hiding both the medium and the empty space. The spirits, in order to appear, had, therefore, *to pass through the wire netting,* by which the medium was sur-

rounded, and out of the curtain, which fell before the opening. There never was a shadow of suspicion, therefore, in the minds of any of the sitters that the medium could possibly personate the spirit forms that appeared, whilst he, feeling quite at his ease and secure from molestation, was able to produce far better manifestations than he would otherwise have done. And, here, I would observe that one cannot make the medium *too* comfortable, and on his comfort a great deal of power depends. Had I the organization of such a cabinet, I would, in addition to what I have described, have a wire-work partition placed across the room, at about six feet distance from the opening, so that the spirits might feel sure of not being seized, to the detriment and danger of the medium.

Having arranged my seance room, the next thing would be to nominate, not only a secretary to look after the funds, but a master of the ceremonies, or "conductor of the seance," as they call him in America, to look after the circle. Such an arbitrator and authority is infinitely useful, and I liked the plan they pursue in the States, of the conductor speaking a few words each evening before the sitting commenced, telling the circle what was expected of them and why they had assembled there. The presence of a "conductor" often prevents any unseemly squabbling, or discontent, about seats, or having to change them; he is, also, a check against any tricks being played with the medium or by the members of the circle.

If the funds are forthcoming, it is most desirable to have a small harmonium in the seance room, and some one who knows how to play it. The solemn tones of the harmonium seem more appropriate to a spiritual gathering than any other, and blend admirably with the human voices.

As the room will be at your own disposal, also, those amongst the circle who can sing, should fix one night in

the week to meet and practice singing appropriate for the sittings. This need not consist of Moody and Sankey's hymns, nor, indeed, of any hymns at all. There are numberless sweet and plaintive melodies which are quite suitable for such an occasion. Above all, avoid the old strains that have been made so common in every seance room, that even the spirits, themselves, must be sick of hearing them. Why is it that, directly a request is preferred for singing, in a seance room, nothing is struck up but "The Sweet-By-and-By," or "Footsteps of Angels?"

I heard a funny story, bearing on this question, the other day, but I will not vouch for its veracity. A circle being requested to "tune up," commenced the immortal, never-fading "Shall We Gather at the River?" As they ceased, an influence manifested itself, unknown to any one there. On being asked who he was, he answered: "I am the unhappy composer of 'Shall We Gather at the River?' Had my life been twice as sinful as it was, I should have expiated everything by the purgatory I have suffered in hearing that tune sung so often, and so badly, at your various meetings. Cannot you possibly find something else to sing? I am sick to death of it." And well he may be.

Surely, since it is considered worth while for choirs to be organized, and to meet for practice in the service of the churches, we might do something similar for our seance rooms. The fearful screeching that usually passes for melody in them is enough, not to raise the dead, but to scare them back to their spheres. When *I* organize *my* spiritual society, the choir will have to meet as regularly as if the denizens of earth were to listen to their efforts, instead of the denizens of Heaven.

Having thus secured my members, my annual subscriptions and entrance fees, my seance room and trained choir, the next thing would be to decide the days of sittings.

Naturally, these must depend so much on the occupations and opportunities of the sitters, that no hard and fast rules can be laid down concerning them, with this exception: that no one should be admitted to membership who is unable to attend regularly. If the sittings are to take place only once a week, Sunday evening appears to be the best day, as people, who work hard all the week, are likely to be pretty well rested by that time, and you must remember that it is impossible to get good manifestations from tired and feeble bodies. But, perhaps, you would prefer to keep Sundays for listening to the utterances of trance-speakers, like Mr. Morse, or for holding sittings with experienced mediums, like Mrs. Davidson. Your trained choir will be able to lead the singing, on such occasions, and make them all the more enjoyable, and the sittings of the society can be held during the week, instead.

These are the rules and regulations which, in my estimation, should form the nucleus of a Spiritualist society; but, of course, there are numerous advantages to be added to it, as members increase and funds come in more freely.

A library of works on the subject would be of infinite value, and, where the society embraces many members of the lower classes, some very pleasant evenings might be spent in giving them readings from well-known authors and poets, who have given their experiences, on this great subject, to the world. Books on Spiritualism are not, as a rule, easily obtainable. They are, for the most part, expensive to purchase, and few booksellers keep them, and, one may add, *no* libraries. The richer members of a society might, therefore, well contrive to make a present of a few such books to the formation of a library to which those, who have no other opportunity of seeing them, might have access.

As the society grows and becomes richer, you will engage mediums to come amongst you and give you an example of their powers ; you will invite preachers and speakers to visit your Sunday gatherings ; you will organize pleasant meetings for your members, during which they may become personally acquainted with each other, and which will promote that spirit of harmony which is so essential for the success of the cause.

I cannot say I like spiritualistic dances. I know there is no harm in dancing—for aught I know, we may enjoy it in the other world, and I hope we may ; but we are not there yet ; we have not cast off our burden of sin and sorrow. And I do not like the idea of excessive merriment, connected with so solemn a matter as interviewing the dear ones, whose loss caused us to shed such bitter tears. I do not envy the Spiritualist who has ceased to regard his belief with a certain amount of awe and solemnity.

I have heard people say to me, after speaking on this subject : " I never met such a woman as you are. You don't seem to mind spirits any more than you do mortals." And I have answered : " Excuse me, but I do mind them a great deal more, and having lost all fear of them does not imply that I have lost all awe. I regard them with the deepest reverence, and always shall, from whatever sphere they come. There can be nothing, in my estimation, but awe, in contemplating a future state, which, however fully we may be convinced of its reality, we can never realize until we enter it."

If you invite trance-speakers, or materializing mediums, or clairvoyants, to attend your gatherings, they will possibly stay a night or two in your midst, and some one of your members will offer to entertain them the while. Should this be the case, their visit should be made one of

complete rest, excepting when they are sitting for the society. There is a great deal to be said on the manner in which mediums should be treated; for, in this age, we do not seem to understand the subject. The term "sensitive" is the most applicable to the persons so gifted, for they are sensitive in the extreme, and, as a rule, delicate in body. To treat them like ordinary people, is to exhaust them unnecessarily; to induce them to attend public scenes of gayety, is to render them unfit for more serious duties; to drag them amongst strangers, who will ply them with questions, out of pure curiosity, is to subject them to divers influences, that may greatly detract from the success of your seances.

The ancients did not treat their mediums so. The oracles of Delphos, the virgins of the Buddhist temples, the vestals who handled the divining tables of the Egyptians, the medicine men of the tribes of Red Indians—were all carefully guarded from the contamination of strange influences, and kept sacredly within the protection of their temples, or tribes. The ancients knew that their spiritual gifts were of so delicate nature, and their physical organization so frail, that, to be kept pure and reliable, they must be protected from the outer world.

But what do we do with our mediums? We engage them to sit for our circles; we turn them into objects of curiosity for the ignorant between whiles; we try to get spiritual phenomena out of them at all times, and we feed them, and lodge them, and fatigue them, just as if they were one of ourselves. Several most gifted mediums have been accused (and unfortunately with justice), of giving way to the pernicious habit of drinking. Will you be surprised when I tell you that this habit has been generally induced by the treatment which they have received at the hands of those who most admire their mediumistic qualities?

You exhaust their powers too much; you never leave them alone; you talk to them, and run after them, day and night, whilst they are under your roof, so that, at last, they are so thoroughly exhausted, they are thankful to take any stimulant that shall relieve the feeling of sickness, and emptiness, and utter prostration, caused by your well-meant, perhaps, but injudicious hospitality.

Remember what the word "medium" signifies—a channel, through which the spiritual waters are conveyed to your lips. The spirit, or *ego*, of the medium is compelled to quit his body, whilst the spirits of the departed pass into it, using its organs of thought and speech, for your edification. Do you suppose this process does not try the physical powers of the medium; that he does not return to his exhausted frame exhausted in spirit as well?

Watch a physical medium, next time you sit with one, and see how wearily he drags his legs after him, as he walks out of the seance room, when the sitting is concluded; look at his tired eyes, the perspiration he wipes from his brow, the faint voice in which he answers your eager questions, the indifferent smile with which he receives your thanks for a successful sitting. The man is completely exhausted, body and spirit; what he requires now is a bed, or a sofa, to lie down on and rest for a few hours, and complete quiet around him whilst he does so. A cup of really good tea—unfortunately, a rarity, in these days of nasty cheapness—and some light refreshment, in the shape of sandwiches, or dainty bread and butter, is the best thing for a medium to take immediately after sitting; then a good rest, to be followed by a substantial meal, such as will restore his wasted energies.

But, unless under exceptional circumstances, *never offer a medium stimulants.* Unless he should be faint, or really ill, his spirit guides will never recommend them, and many

have told me that they have traced to this supposed hospitality more than one instance of mediums yielding themselves up to the fatal habit of intoxication. Good tea, with a dash of orange pekee in it, is the best stimulant for them; and I know one celebrated medium who never takes anything else after a seance. Here is one instance, therefore, in which we do not guard our mediums sufficiently. The vestal virgins of the Temple, and also the ancient priests, you may remember, were not allowed to taste strong drink, from their birth, or they were unfitted for the service of religion.

And we ought to guard the digestion of our mediums as well. Digestion has a great deal to do with good manifestations—indeed, all the interior economy has.

I remember how vexed "Joey" used to be when Willy Eglinton had permitted himself to get a headache before sitting, and we could hear him scolding him, inside the cabinet, for having been so careless.

Of course, whilst we are so lukewarm with regard to Spiritualism as to allow our mediums to go on working for their daily bread, whilst they exercise their spiritual gifts, we shall never enjoy them in perfection.

A man who has to think and work all day for the support of his family is not likely to find himself in good condition for such an exhausting trial as sitting for materialization when the evening comes; and when we consider that he sits up, perhaps, till eleven or twelve, and then has to rise early in the morning again, it is hardly wonderful that he should, sometimes, fail to procure manifestations, or have recourse to stimulants to keep up his failing strength.

A good medium should be packed in cotton, wool and lavender. How many of them are? We know that the clergy of the English Church are, some of them, miserably paid; but what stipends do we allow our mediums? Many

of them work for nothing; many are obliged, by reason of the necessity to live, to accept a most inadequate remuneration in return for their ineffable services to humanity; and all who do so are compelled to make a secret of it, on account of the infamous law still existing on our statute books, regarding witches and fortune-tellers.

When are the Spiritualists going to club together and get up a memorial to have that old black-letter law abolished? When the Royal family of England follow the pursuit of Spiritualism, and numberless men of repute and renown have given their testimony to the truth of it—is it not about time that the power to commit mediums to prison as "rogues and vagabonds," should be taken out of the hands of magistrates, whom the press is ever reviling for their ignorance, injustice and stupidity?

By the same statutes, an actor, when he dies, should be buried where four cross-roads meet, with a stake driven through his heart. What would Mr. Irving's, or Mr. Toole's friends say if the legal authorities insisted upon treating their bodies after death in such a fashion? Yet, it would be quite as reasonable and lawful as treating mediums, as if they were all frauds, taking money under false pretenses.

It is impossible that, while they thus live, as it were, under the shadow of the law, and in fear lest it should swoop down upon them, at any moment, mediums can be seen at their best. To my mind, this freedom from all anxiety, on such a score, is the reason why spiritual manifestations are so superior in America to what they are in England. *There,* people are not treated as if they were children or fools. The law recognizes they should be free agents in all matters of conscience, and does not pretend to dictate their private opinions to them.

And why England should permit Shakers and Salva-

tionists and Peculiar People to exist in the land and practice their several religions in peace (though, as in the case of the Salvation Army, no one else is allowed to enjoy it) and, yet, take a savage pleasure in molesting Spiritualists, would be a mystery, did I not know, in common with many others, that it is the Spiritualists' own fault. When are we ever seen to protect, or stand up for our mediums, when they are falsely accused?

In America, if a medium were accused of cheating, he would find a thousand of his adherents springing up, ready to do battle for him and bear witness to his fidelity.

In England, what happens in such a case? The newspapers devoted to the cause, immediately publish all details of it, that they may be sure to reach the eyes and ears of those who may not have happened to hear of them. They do not send special reporters to enquire into the rights and wrongs of the accusation, which has been, invariably, brought by an outsider; but they turn it into a sensational article to swell the interest of their paper, and make the sceptics say: "Why, even his own organ condemns him!" To read the Spiritualist papers, one would imagine they had been instituted to *expose* Spiritualism instead of to *protect* it. I am not including "Light," nor Mr. Stead's publications, in this censure. I have received strange accounts, however, of the lack of information to be obtained at the offices of some spiritualistic papers. What are these offices for? For what reason have they secretaries and clerks in charge of them, if it is not that enquirers into the reality of Spiritualism may have their questions answered, and instructed where to go and whom to apply to, to aid them in their research?

Yet, ladies and gentlemen have complained to me that when they have visited those offices, to ask for a certain book, or the address of a certain medium, they have met

with scant courtesy, and scanter information. The clerks have not got the book; they do not know if it is popular or not; they do not know the medium's address—not anything about him, or her; they do not know of any reliable mediums in town. Now, this is a nice way to further a cause, or to induce strangers to adopt it. Had I been at the head of that office, the clerk who dared to make the foregoing statement would have got the sack the following Saturday. Why do not the secretaries of such offices make it part of their duty to find out the resident mediums all over England; their capabilities and their addresses; also their fees, if any? Why do they not sit with them, so as to be able to give a personal opinion on their merits, and if they have not a certain spiritualistic book in their lending library, why do they not procure it for their clients? But considering that, in comparison to other literature, books on Spiritualism are few and far between, it is a disgrace to the cause that any library should be without any one of them, and a still greater disgrace that the person in charge of such a place has not made himself acquainted with, at least, the tenor and general style of every volume written on the subject.

Had I the leisure, I would set up such a Spiritualistic Library and Office of Enquiry in London as should knock the whole lot into "smithereens."

What is the use of going to the expense of keeping up such places, that should, in the present condition of generally awakened curiosity concerning Spiritualism, be drawing their thousands into the cause, but only disgust people with their expressed indifference to it, instead?

When I think of the numbers of strangers who have written, or come to me for information, since "There is no Death" was published, I know that, if the newspapers were what they ought to be, and the offices of those papers

had the proper information to give the public, instead of rudeness and inattention; if the Spiritualists, themselves, showed more energy and interest in their religion, rallied round their mediums better, and took a little more trouble generally, the number of adherents to it would have been doubled by now.

Far more interest is shown in Spiritualism in the country than in London. In several provincial towns the Spiritualists have large rooms or meeting-houses, where they assemble regularly, to study the truths in which they believe—but, in town, people have come to me over and over again, with the complaint that they are anxious to enquire more fully into the doctrine, but they cannot find out where to go, nor whom to go to.

When is this state of things to be remedied? When are we to have a proper organ for the diffusion of our creed? When a proper temple to pursue it in? When shall we have a recognized meeting-place, a public library, an office where all enquiries on the subject shall be answered courteously and all possible information given? Until that era dawns—until Spiritualists band together; until they learn how to treat their mediums properly, and cease to believe every falsehood they may hear against them—I fear we shall go on as we do now—shall remain an unrecognized, persecuted, ridiculed, and, presumably, lawless people.

THE END.


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